

FAME & FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.



With the entrance of the Hindoo temple before them the two boys rushed eagerly forward. Jack, in the lead, stepped upon the huge slab of stone which lay in his path. It revolved under his weight and he disappeared from view.

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

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OR, HUNTING A HINDOO TREASURE

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.—In An Indian Jungle.

"Where in thunder is Rum Jum and Nagar?" said Sam Farjeon, fanning his heated face with his white helmet hat. "I haven't seen them since we sat down there to rest ourselves."

"Blessed if I know. Lagging behind like the lazy rascals they are, I suppose," replied his companion, Jack Hadley, a manly-looking young American.

Sam got up and yelled for their Hindoo attendants, but received no reply. The jungle, brilliant with color, and alive with small birds of variegated plumage and humming insects, lay all around the two boys. It was a great trackless expanse of high vegetation and trees, although the party of four had been following a sort of path since they entered it, but this path was rather obscure except to the practiced eyes and experience of the natives. Rum Jum had been hired by Jack as guide, and Nagar to help him carry the food hamper and other articles. The party of four had left Bombay the second morning before, the first stage of their journey taking them through a big mountain range to the more level country beyond. The second stage was begun that morning at sunrise, when they entered the jungle, which lay between them and the village of Kurpool, where they planned to pass the night.

It was rather a hare-brained expedition the boys had set out upon—namely, to visit a certain temple, said to be abandoned, where a quarter of a million in golden guineas, an obsolete English coinage, lay hidden in a secret spot. Jack had heard the story of the treasure from an old native resident in Bombay, who had furnished him with a view to the spot where it was alleged to be buried, on a written agreement from the boy that he was to receive one-fifth of the treasure, or of whatever part of it the boys succeeded in recovering, if they were fortunate. The young Americans were fairly well equipped for such a journey owing to their knowledge of the Hindoo language, which they had learned in Bombay. Jack's uncle was the American consul at Bombay, and the two boys acted as his clerks, with sundry native helpers.

They secured a two week's vacation to carry out their plans, which they were careful not to confide to Mr. Hadley, the consul, since that gentleman being more experienced in the country would have deemed their scheme Quixotic, not to say very dangerous, and have put his veto on it.

Even when Jack intimated that they were merely going into the interior to view the country, his uncle wanted them to postpone the trip till he could go with them; but finding they did not want to postpone it, he told them not to wander out of the regular roads, and furnished them with a list of places where they could put up at. They were supposed to do all their traveling on horseback. They started out that way, Rum Jum and Nagar accompanying them on foot, carrying the supplies, but they found that to follow the route they were intent upon they had to leave their animals at the village beyond the range where they passed their first night, for Rum Jum told them that the jungle was not passable for horses—a statement which was not true.

They might have questioned Rum Jum's veracity if he had not been recommended to them by the old fellow who had fired their imaginations with the story of the treasure, and furnished them with the clew to its location. His name was Dharwar, and he was regarded as a very respectable old chap in the native quarter of Bombay, but he wasn't all that he assumed to be, as the boys might have learned had they instituted inquiries about him. Unfortunately they accepted him at his own valuation, and as a result they had reason to regret it, though in the end they came out all right, but that was more through good luck and their own grit and courage than anything else. Having brought our hero and his companion to a point where their tribulations began, we will proceed with our story. Sam's shouts brought forth no response. Rum Jum and Nagar failed to appear or even to announce their whereabouts.

"I don't like the look of this," said Sam, mopping his face with his handkerchief, and facing Jack with a disturbed look. "Where do you suppose those rascals have gone?"

"How can I tell?" replied Jack. "I'm not a mind reader."

"They must have kept on while we were resting. They can stand the pace so much better than we that they might not have cared to wait for us."

"But I ordered them to stop, and Rum Jum said they would."

"Why didn't they, then?"

"Rum Jum told me he was thirsty, and that he and Nagar were going to look for a stream which was close by."

"They might have left the hamper and other things here till they came back."

"That's right. Perhaps they did. There is so much confounded vegetation in this jungle, and the grass is so tall, that a fellow can't see much further than his nose."

"But we're in a clearing, under the shade of several trees. There was no reason why those chaps should have left their load out of sight."

"They have their own way of doing things. We've got to allow the natives a certain amount of leeway. We're not in the States, you know."

"Any one can see that with his eyes shut. You wouldn't find a jungle like this anywhere in America."

"There are chaparrals out West where a fellow can be as easily lost as in this jungle. A friend of mine lost his bearings in a very small one once and was hours getting out of it, although he was at no time further than a quarter of a mile from the outer edge. It was full of prickly cactus that compelled him to continually alter his course to pass them. Indeed, he might have kept traveling longer only he caught sight of the smoke of a distant house and aimed for it as best he could."

"I'm rested enough to go on. I wish those chaps would turn up," said Sam.

Rum Jum and Nagar, however, did not turn up, though they were gone long enough to find the stream, slake their thirst and return.

"Suppose they've deserted us?" said Sam, anxiously.

"Why should they? We have promised to pay them handsomely for their services when we get back to the city," answered Jack.

"I don't put much stock in either of them. Rum Jum looks like a great rascal—a sneaky one, while Nagar's face would ornament any rogues' gallery in the world."

"This is a nice time to form that conclusion. These common Hindoos are not beauties. You've been long enough in the country to know that. We took them both on Dharwar's recommendation. I took it for granted that he knew we could rely on them. I haven't any particular fault to find with either of them so far."

"They have no business to leave us in the lurch this way."

"Look around and see where they've put the hamper."

Sam hunted, but couldn't find any trace of it.

Jack got up, and helped him, but without result.

"I'll bet they've gone on and left us to follow as best we can," said Sam.

"Then I'll have something to say to them when we reach the village."

"How are we going to reach it without a guide?"

"Rum Jum said it was straight ahead, about ten miles."

"I hope he wasn't lying. Let's go on."

They shouldered their rifles, which were of Remington make, magazine pattern, and proceeded, keeping the declining sun at their back.

"If there's a stream this way we haven't seen it," said Sam.

"It may be running parallel with our route."

"It might be doing a lot of things," growled Sam. "If you want to know my opinion, we're up against it hard."

"Don't get discouraged at the outset of our enterprise. Think of the gold—the \$250,000 we expect to fetch away."

"We've got to find it first."

"I've got the directions in a general way."

"I've been wondering why Dharwar didn't go after it himself if it's so easy to get hold of."

"He's an old man. Fifty thousand without leaving town is better for him than taking chances to get the whole treasure."

"That looks reasonable, but most men would take considerable risk at any age to corral a quarter of a million, even if they believed they couldn't spend a quarter of it. There is a heap of satisfaction in the knowledge that you are worth money, a lot of it. You can put on a lot of style."

"Dharwar would look fine trying to put on style, wouldn't he?" grinned Jack. "He'd want to get his wrinkles ironed out first thing."

The boys walked on for half an hour without hearing from Rum Jum and Nagar. Apparently those worthies had temporarily, at least, abandoned their employers.

"We'll give them thunder," said Sam.

"I'll certainly read Rum Jum the riot act. He is responsible for Nagar. He introduced the fellow to us and put his OK on him."

"If any one is to blame for shaking us this way it's Rum Jum. He ought to be kicked."

"It wouldn't be safe to kick him till we get back to Bombay. He's got us at a disadvantage out here in the wilderness."

"If he doesn't do better we'll report him to Dharwar."

They plodded along in the shade of overhanging tree limbs for another half an hour, and the heat compelled them to take another rest.

"We've had luck in not meeting with a tiger or a big snake since we entered the jungle," said Sam. "I have no desire to run foul of such things outside of a menagerie where they are behind the bars."

"We have probably passed close to both. They usually sleep during the heat of the day, and even if partially aroused will not attack one unless they are real hungry. At night all the beasts and big reptiles are wide awake and lively. Then they forage for a meal. It wouldn't be safe to pass here in the dark."

"I hope we escape from this jungle before sundown, then. We ought to if Rum Jum told the truth about the distance to the village. If he didn't, then we'll be in a fine fix."

"Well, we have our rifles, and if darkness should find us still in the jungle, we'll build a circle of fire around us and keep watch."

"That's all very nice, but I'd rather not be here after dark. Besides, we'd have to go hungry, and that wouldn't suit me, either."

"You're always thinking about your stomach."

"It's an important part of my anatomy. I'll bet you don't forget yours. I notice you've never behind at the meal table."

"It isn't good manners to keep others waiting for you."

"Suppose we're stuck in this jungle to-night, we'll have to sleep on an empty stomach."

"Not while there are birds and monkeys around."

"Monkeys!"

"Sure. A nice tender monkey steak would go fine," grinned Jack.

"I'd rather starve than eat monkey meat," said Sam, in a tone of disgust.

"Pooh! Roast monkey is a great delicacy among the natives."

"Well, I'm not a native, thank goodness!"

Jack laughed and said they'd better get a move on. They were hardly on their feet before they heard confused sounds a short distance on their left, then a shrill, female scream.

"Hello, what's that?" cried Jack.

Then came a rush of footsteps, and three Hindoos, with frightened faces, came pushing through the grass and dashed past them. Two more screams followed, and then silence.

CHAPTER II.—The Princess Keket.

"Follow me, Sam, I'm going to see what's up," cried Jack, starting in the direction whence the screams came.

A woman was in trouble, and Jack was chivalrous enough to rush to her aid, even if he ran into danger by doing so. Sam followed because he didn't want to be left behind. Forcing their way through the maze of vegetation, they suddenly came to the edge of a small clearing. Here they saw a palanquin standing on the ground, with a dark skinned beauty half leaning out of it. Her eyes were closed and she appeared to be unconscious. Her arms were bare to the shoulders. Around her upper arm was a band of gold, and around her wrist four circlets of gold and jewels. Her loose attire was handsome and expensive. Clearly she was no common person, the daughter, maybe, of a rajah, or some Hindoo potentate or official. The palanquin was no ordinary one, either. It was large and roomy, with soft flowing draperies, depending from an ornamental top.

At least four stout natives were required to carry it, and the boys did not doubt that the three scared Hindoos they had seen running away were bearers of this vehicle. The fourth was in the jaws of a huge tiger which stood facing the palanquin as if figuring on whether he should start off with his prize, or try and add the senseless girl to his feast. Any one familiar with the animal would have known that the tiger was perfectly satisfied with one victim. It was not likely that he would attack the girl, particularly as she lay still like a dead one. The tiger heard the approach of the boys, and turned his glaring eyes upon them when they appeared and stopped. He switched his tail back and forth as if he half expected they had come to deprive him of his anticipated meal. Jack felt that he and his companion stood in no particular peril so long as they did not interfere. At the same time he felt that it was his duty to save the native if he could. The man was probably only stunned.

He sank on his knee to take aim at the tiger's eyes. Sam, however, was rattled at the sight and fired offhand. The ball slightly wounded the animal, and shaking his head with a growl, he turned to depart.

"You spoiled my aim, you chump!" cried Jack.

Then aiming at the animal's ear, he fired. With a smothered roar the tiger sprang in the air and fell dead with the ball in his brain. It was a

fortunate shot. The unconscious man fell under its huge paws, which dug at the grass for a moment or two through mere muscular action. Satisfied that all danger was over, Jack ran forward to the palanquin. He raised the dusky beauty up and laid her back on her couch. At her feet was a wicker basket. Jack opened it and found a lunch and a flagon of sweet wine. He poured a little of the wine into the girl's mouth. This revived her and she looked at the boy.

"Ah, sahib, who are you? What has happened?"

"Your bearers were attacked by a tiger, and one of them——"

The girl uttered an ejaculation of terror.

"I remember. Poor Foxi Fum! The tiger has killed him and carried him off."

"I hope Foxi is not dead. I killed the tiger."

"You, sahib! You killed the tiger!"

"At the first shot."

"Where is it?"

"Look yonder."

The girl looked and shuddered.

"Where are my other bearers?" she asked.

"Run away."

"The cowards! Yet how can I blame them. The beast is a monster. Sahib, you have saved my life, and I am deeply grateful to you."

She gave Jack a look that set his blood tingling. She was the loveliest girl he had ever seen, and to have met her in that jungle under such thrilling circumstances seemed like a dream.

"Don't mention it," said Jack, gallantly. "I am happy to have been able to render you a service."

"Ah, you Englishmen are such——"

"I am not an Englishman. I'm an American."

"Is it not almost the same? You both talk the same language."

"There is a difference," said Jack, who did not care to be regarded as an English subject.

"Generous stranger, I shall never forget the obligation. Nor will my father, the Rajah of Allabad."

"Your father is a Rajah, then?"

"Yes. I am the Princess Keket."

"Allow me to say you are a most charming princess. My name is Jack Hadley, and my uncle is consul at Bombay, a government official."

"I knew you were not a common person," said Keket with an arch smile.

"No, I'm a very uncommon person, so is my friend here. He is quill-driver extraordinary at the consulate, a very responsible position, I assure you. Come here, Sam, I want to introduce you to the Princess Keket. I see you have rescued Foxi Fum from the tiger's claws. Is he alive?"

"Sure he's alive. He'll be kicking in a few minutes. He's got a nasty wound on the shoulder, from the tiger's teeth, but he'll get over that. These natives are hard to kill if they have half a chance."

Sam came up and was presented to the Rajah's daughter.

"Happy to make your acquaintance, princess," said Sam, with his best bow, for he, too, was much impressed by her beauty.

The girl, who appeared to be about fifteen, smiled charmingly at him. Jack went over to

the senseless Foxi Fum and poured some of the wine down his throat. He opened his eyes and groaned.

"Ask the princess if she has a piece of cloth to bind up this chap's wounds with," called Jack.

Koket pointed to the basket and told Sam to take the large napkin on which the food lay. He fetched it to Jack and, wetting it with wine, they bound up the man's wounds. Another swig at the bottle made Foxi feel able to get on his feet. He drew near the princess and bowed low. The girl expressed her sympathy for him, and that raised his spirits. He asked where the other bearers were, and being told they had decamped, he called them hard names, and declared he would do a number of things to them when they came back. The boys learned that there were four bearers besides Foxi, who was the boss of the outfit. It was his duty to run either ahead or alongside of the palanquin, and keep the bearers moving. He was a sort of under steward to the Rajah, and the princess was in his care on this occasion.

Had she suffered any injury from the tiger, Foxi would have had his head cut off, or otherwise been put out of the way, unless her injuries were very slight and she interceded for him. Had she been killed Foxi's finish would have been accompanied by the most up-to-date torture the Rajah could have devised, though the chances are in that case Foxi would have been foxy enough to skip the country. The rest of the bunch would have been similarly treated unless they, too, made themselves scarce. The Rajah, as the boys later found out, was a very autocratic individual, who lorded it over a district by the grace of the British authorities, receiving a salary for his services, though he was very wealthy in his own right. He entertained a great contempt for the English, though he prudently pretended great loyalty toward them officially, and frequently entertained the bigbugs at his splendid house.

He often did things that the English authorities would have strenuously objected to had they learned about them, but no one had the nerve to give the Rajah away. It would have gone hard with them if they had, for his Highness had a long reach. About once a month, at the change of the moon, he was afflicted with what some people call the mulligrubs or blues. On these occasions the princess always started visiting around to get away from him, for his grouch extended even to her, that is why she was now on her way to Bombay to pass a week with the Governor-general's family, with whom she was a great favorite. When the princess told Foxi Fum that he owed his life to Jack, the under steward bowed his head almost to the earth, put Jack's hand to his lips, and declared his gratitude was as wide as the sky above.

"Sahib, so long as the sun, moon and stars exist I am your slave," he said.

That was very pretty from a poetical point of view, but otherwise his allegiance to the Rajah would prevent a practical demonstration. He was Jack's slave in a Pickwickian sense.

At this point several dusky, turbaned heads poked themselves through the shrubbery. These belonged to the four bearers who had returned to reconnoiter the situation. If the princess was

gone, they knew what they were up against. Sam called Foxi Fum's attention to them. He called them forward and went for their scalps in a way that must have made their heads swim. At any rate they flopped down on their hands and knees, and with their foreheads on the ground, groveled before him. They begged him not to inform the Rajah of their delinquency on their return to Allabad, and after some hesitation he agreed to say nothing if each came up with a year's wages as a bribe. This they agreed to, and so peace was restored.

Then the princess rated them soundly, but promised to say nothing about their delinquency to her father. The sun was now low in the heavens, a fact which Foxi called attention to. It would not be safe for them to continue on their way through the jungle, as darkness was bound to overtake them, and then they stood in great peril.

"What are you going to do, then, Foxi Fum?" said Jack.

"We will return to the cave of the jungle Fakir and ask for shelter for the night. He will not refuse the princess," replied Foxi.

"And how about the rest of us?"

"The Fakir might take you and Sahib Sam in, but the rest of us will have to camp outside with fires for our protection."

"Heave ahead, then," said Jack.

Foxi gave the order, the bearers picked up the palanquin, and with the boys beside it the whole party started off at a lively trot.

CHAPTER III—The Man of Mystery.

The party duly reached the Fakir's habitation, which was nothing more or less than a cave in a huge rocky mound, surrounded on the side and back by tall grass, while the dark opening faced upon a clearing. To the two young Americans it looked to be a remarkable exhibition of nature's handiwork. The mound was all of forty feet high, perhaps sixty feet wide, and seemingly of the same depth. The extent of the cave itself could not be guessed at, since it was pitch dark inside, but the entrance was about four feet in width by seven wide. As they entered the clearing the Fakir came to the doorway and stood there. He was an average sized man, naked but for a white cloth that encircled his waist, and hung in loose folds nearly to his knees. On his head he wore a kind of turban, and in his hand he carried a staff. His face looked rather pleasant, but was half hidden beneath a beard, parted in the center of his chin and carefully trimmed. Fully attired in European garments, he would have looked like a very respectable elderly gentleman. Before Foxi Fum could say a word the Fakir said, in mellow accents:

"The Princess Koket is welcome to my humble habitation. In expectation of her return I have prepared a couch for her, and refreshments. The young Americans are also welcomed, and shall share with the princess my hospitality."

"How in thunder does he know we're Americans?" said Sam to Jack.

He spoke so low that the Fakir couldn't possibly have heard him, and yet that personage replied:

"Sahib, I know everything. I am an adept and can read thoughts as well as faces. The past, the present and the future roll before my eyes at my command. I know the errand that brought you young sahibs from Bombay, where you are attached to the American consulate as clerks. It is a foolish one—more foolish than you think. A trick of Dharwar's to—but you shall learn anon. Now I must minister to the wants of the princess."

"Holy mackerel!" gasped Sam, "will you listen to that. Why, this old chap must be a regular magician or fortune-teller. I wonder how he got his information."

Jack paid little attention to Sam. He was deeply interested in the lovely Koker, and he stepped forward to assist her alight from the palanquin. She placed her dainty hand in his and favored him with one of her goo-goo glances that completely enthralled him. If ever a boy was in love at first sight, Jack was since he had met the charming brown-skinned maiden. He didn't know that Koker was nick-named in Allabad the man-catcher. It wouldn't have made any difference with him if he had. He was willing to be bound hand and foot to that divinity. He would have given up his share of the Hindoo treasure, if already in sight, to be permitted to bask in her many charms. Don't think that he was foolish. Remember he was at a very susceptible age, and that the girl was simply the par excellence of female beauty.

Foxi Fum subsequently told Sam in confidence that the Cour Journal, the editor of which received his pay from the Rajah's treasury, often printed half a page about Koker's personal charms, and then didn't half do justice to her loveliness. As Jack let Koker toward the Fakir, that personage turned about and waved his staff. Immediately, as if he had touched an electric push button, the cave was illuminated by a soft, pink glow which came from nowhere in particular, as far as could be made out. The Fakir walked in with a majestic stride, and pointing to a soft couch, bade the princess be seated. Nearby was the opening to an inner cave, and on the threshold was a bazier, which appeared to exude or throw out the glow which lighted the main cave.

Sam had followed, as if irresistibly drawn forward by a magnetic current, and as he reached Jack's side the Fakir laid his staff on the ground and said that on no account must his three guests as they valued their lives, step beyond it. Why this order was given the boys did not understand at first, but they soon saw a reason for it. Several large and venomous snakes issued from the room beyond and glided hissing across the floor, but they carefully avoided the staff, as well as the open spaces in either direction it pointed. They went as far as the entrance, but did not leave the cave. From the folds of his tunic the Fakir produced an instrument in use among snake-charmers throughout India and began to play on it. Instantly the snakes stopped hissing. They raised their necks high in the air and began swaying themselves to the cadence of the peculiar tune. They gradually approached the Fakir and bobbed solemnly in front of him. Gradually they seemed to grow dopy and sank slowly to the ground. In a few minutes each

became seemingly lifeless. Then the music stopped.

"My children," said the Fakir, in a soft, fatherly way, "you need refreshment. Eat."

He pointed to a flat slab of stone about the height of a table, which the boys could have sworn had nothing on it when they came in, and there stood a flagon of wine, a small wicker basket full of rice cakes, another with fruit, while an earthen dish, divided in three parts, held a shivering kind of jelly very similar to gelatine. There was a silver knife and spoon for each person, and the young people, full of wonder as to how the repast had been provided, proceeded to eat without question, and found everything excellent in quality and taste. After finishing the meal, the three who had eaten standing sat down on the couch.

"Oh, heavens!" cried Sam, pointing with staring eyes at the stone.

His companions followed the direction of his finger, and to their amazement the stone was perfectly clear of the dishes and remains of the feast.

"Be not alarmed, my children," said the Fakir; "what you have seen and partaken of came at my will. This is a simple matter for the adept. He can materialize all things at will, and also disperse. The meal you have eaten, and the receptacles, came from the Rajah's kitchen at Allabad, and are back again."

"How far is Allabad from here?" asked Sam.

"Forty miles," said Koker.

"And that stuff came forty miles in a moment?"

"Even so," nodded the girl. "This holy Fakir can do anything."

"Then maybe he can bring me that package of cigarettes I forgot to fetch along from my room in Bombay?"

"He could, but I would not ask him."

"Holy smoke! Look at him now. He's as rigid as a statue," said Sam.

For several minutes the Fakir stood as though transformed into stone. Then he heaved a sigh and seemed to awake from a kind of trance. He turned to Sam and held out his hand. To the boy's amazement he saw the identical package of cigarettes he had left behind. He recognized the package by a mark he had made on the wrapper, and also by the fact that two of the cigarettes were missing. Sam took the package gingerly, actually doubting the evidence of his senses, as probably any one in his place would have. This exhibition savored strongly of magic.

The boys had often heard of the astonishing feats of the adepts of India—men who, after a life-time of self-denial and study along certain lines are supposed to have acquired wonderful occult powers. Thousands of level-headed tourists have witnessed many of their unexplainable feats, and are ready to vouch for the truth of what they have seen; and yet it is an open question whether their seemingly impossible feats were actually accomplished or whether the spectators were temporarily under hypnotic influence and saw merely what the adepts willed them to see. Sam did not attempt to smoke one of those cigarettes then, either in deference to the princess or because he was afraid of the articles. He put the package in his pocket and did not think of it again till he returned to his room in Bombay, and there

he saw the cigarettes where he had left them. So perhaps the young people did not actually eat a meal as they supposed they did, but were under a hypnotic spell. The Fakir pushed a curtain aside and pointed to a recess in the stone wall where there was a couch.

"If the princess wishes to retire she will enjoy undisturbed repose until morning," said the adept.

Koket bowed to him, and then wishing the boys good-night, stepped into the recess and the curtain fell behind her. Jack and Sam followed her exit with their eyes, and then turned to address the Fakir. He was gone.

"Where did he go, and how could he get out of sight without our knowing it?" said Sam, wonderingly.

"Apparently he can do things that would make our best stage magicians look like thirty cents," replied Jack.

"What's that paper in your hand?"

Jack became aware for the first time that he held a paper in his fingers. He looked at it and found some sentences in the Hindoo language. The communication read as follows:

"It is fated that you shall follow your quest for the Hindoo treasure, but I warn you that your path is full of danger, and not even I can foresee the ultimate results of your mad enterprise. Beware of Rum Jum and his companion Nagar. They are not to be trusted. Dharwar has sold you as annual victims to the goddess Kalee, the divinity of the almost extinct Thugs. Rum Jum and Nagar have engaged to deliver you both to the priests of the temple. In an effort to save you I separated you this afternoon from these men, who are thugs at heart, as is also Dharwar, the secret agent of the remnant of the order. The treasure is where Dharwar told you it was, but it is the bait of the trap intended for your destruction, as it has proved the destruction of others. Why I have been led to take an interest in and warn you, who are strangers to me and of another religion, I may not say. It is the will of my Master, and I can but obey. Therefore I say beware of what lies before you. I have no power to prevent you going ahead, or I would. Nor can you recede, now that you have started, since the power that draws you on is inexorable. It is Kismet, your Fate."

"What does the paper say?" asked Sam curiously.

"It is a warning from the Fakir. Read it for yourself."

Sam reached out his hand for the paper. He grasped nothing. The paper had vanished as though it never existed.

CHAPTER IV.—In Dreamland.

"Where did it go?" asked Sam. "You must have dropped it."

They both looked on the couch and on the ground for the paper, but they could not find it.

"This must be some more of the Fakir's magic," said Sam, in an awed tone. "Do you remember what was written on the paper?"

"Distinctly," replied Jack.

"Tell me, then."

Jack repeated the words he had read exactly as he had seen them, for they seemed to ring in his ears as though repeated by the soft voice of the Fakir.

"So, Rum Jum and Nagar are traitors, and Dharwar is behind them, the scoundrel! To get the treasure we must walk into the trap waiting for us, eh? Not if I know it," said Sam, resolutely. "We will retrace our steps to-morrow, and the treasure can go to thunder for all I care."

"But the Fakir said it is fated that we shall continue our quest—that we cannot turn back now that we are started, since the power that draws us on is inexorable. It is our fate," said Jack.

"Fate be hanged!" growled Sam. "Do you suppose I'm going to walk into the spider's web now that my eyes are open? Not that you could notice it."

"I am sleepy," said Jack, with a yawn. "We will talk further about our plans in the morning."

Even as Sam looked at him the boy sank back on the couch and fell into a deep sleep. And his sleep was visited by a vivid dream. He thought he was in the midst of an extensive garden, and by his side reclined Koket, more bewitching than ever. Her limpid eyes seemed to look into his very soul, and he sat there as fascinated and incapable of motion as though hypnotized by the baleful glare of a serpent.

"You love me, sahib?" came softly from her lovely lips.

"Love you, Koket!" cried Jack. "I would go through fire and water for you."

"Ah, it is Fate that has brought us together, Sahib, for I recognize you as my soul-mate. You are from the West, and an unbeliever in the great mystery of life. You are ignorant of the principles of Buddhism, the only true and mystic faith, and ignorance is the root of all evil. Four sublime truths point out the path that leads to Nirvana. These four truths are: Life is sorrow—the cause of suffering is desire—conquest of self means freedom from desire—an eight-fold path leads to the cessation of sorrow."

The girl paused and regarded him with a yearning fondness, like that a young mother bestows on her first-born.

"Go on," breathed the boy.

"Nirvana corresponds to a certain extent with your Heaven. Buddhism teaches that it is the loss of all personal consciousness by absorption into the divine. Esoteric Buddhism, in which I believe, says it is the state of consciousness of the liberated soul. There the soul joins its mate and they become as one, absorbed in each other. Every soul has its mate. Sometimes they come together on earth and perfect bliss between them results, even though they be unconscious of the divine affinity which exists between them. The earth is thousands of years old, and you and I have passed through many reincarnations—perhaps several hundred. We remember nothing of our former lives, nor when we return again will we remember what we have experienced in this one. At the moment of death—as our soul flutters toward Nirvana—the past is unrolled before us like a panorama, and each of our lives from the first passes in review. After that comes a blank—the twin souls join and pass 1,000 years

together, in non-individual consciousness—then the time being come, we are born again on earth to serve a further penance.”

“And you believe I am your soul-mate?” said the boy eagerly.

“I feel you are. We are one, divided by reincarnation. We belong to each other. It is my soul, purified to a certain extent by the study and practice in my faith, that sees in your soul, unresponsive because it is ignorant of its destiny, its affinity. Your soul, alas! is dead to the truth, but, sahib, it shall be my duty to awaken it into life. And then——”

“But, Koket, I am a Christian. I cannot adopt the Buddhist faith. It would be repugnant to my feelings.”

“There is but one God, sahib, be satisfied.”

“That is my belief. And I also believe that we are born but once, and that death closes our earthly destiny.”

“Foolish boy!” she replied, with exquisite tenderness. “What is one life? A hundred years passes as swiftly as the brief passage of a cloud across the face of the sun. What experience could the soul gain in so short a time? A man dies and it is said of him, he is not dead but sleepeth—to awaken in a new reincarnation. What you do in one existence is reflected on the other. Ah, sahib, could I but convince you of the great truth, how happy would I be! Are we to part just as we have met, and see no more of each other until we come together in Nirvana? Few souls are privileged in this life to recognize their affinity. I cannot bear to lose you, my soulmate—and yet life is sorrow.”

The pearly tears gathered in the girl's eyes. Her bosom heaved with emotion. She arose and extended her arms to the boy, while her eyes reflected a devouring love, mirrored in their liquid depths. Who could resist such a temptation? Jack threw out his own arms to enfold her and—awoke to find the morning sunshine streaming in at the mouth of the cave, and a scene of activity going on outside. There was no sign of the Fakir, nor of his staff. On the flat stone lay a tempting meal of rice cakes, honey and fruit. As Jack sprang up, Koket, looking as blooming as a rose, appeared from behind the curtain.

“Good-morning, sahib,” she said, with a modest blush.

“Koket, my darling, we never shall part!” he cried, extending his arm toward the girl, impetuously.

The princess drew back, and put out one of her exquisitely moulded arms to stay him.

“The sahib forgets himself,” she said, softly.

Jack stopped as if he had received a blow in the face.

“Koket, this from you? And yet you told me you were my——”

At that moment Jack looked supremely miserable.

“I told you what, sahib?” she said, dropping her eyes, in that enticing way that beauty knows best how to adopt.

“It doesn't matter, Koket,” said Jack, in a broken voice. “I ask your pardon for my presumption. I am not of your class—your faith. I am just a plain American boy, and I am proud of it, while you—you are a princess, the daughter

of a Rajah. I had a dream, as fleeting as life, according to your views of it, and perhaps it was a glimpse of your Nirvana, where one meets one's kindred soul! but—I am back on earth again—to work out my destiny alone. Whatever we may really be to each other, here, at least, we are as far apart as the poles. Yet I shall never forget you, Koket—nor the dream which for one brief instant illuminated two souls with but a single thought, two hearts that beat as one.”

Jack turned with a dry sob and started for the entrance of the cave, where he saw Sam talking to Foxi Fum.

“Sahib!”

It was only a word from the lips of the princess, and yet it thrilled him like nothing ever thrilled him before. He turned, but did not look at her.

“I hope you do not think me ungrateful for the service you have rendered me. I beg you will accept this, and my assurance that I shall remember you with gratitude as long as I live.”

She held out her hand. In her fingers glittered a ring that shone like living fire.

“Koket, I need nothing to remember you,” he said.

“Yet you will take this, will you not?” she replied, drawing close to him, her eyes shining like twin stars of great magnitude.

She caught his hand, kissed it and put the ring in one of his fingers.

“For my sake!” she breathed.

“For your sake I'd dare anything—even life itself. I love you, Koket, and love unreturned, like life, is sorrow.”

She trembled visibly a moment. Her bosom rose and fell as though stirred by some deep emotion. Her glorious eyes swept his handsome face swiftly and earnestly. Then—she laughed softly and turned away. In good truth she had been well named, the man-catcher, and Koket should have been spelled coquette. The coming of Sam into the cave put an end to this pretty scene.

“Hello, old chap, I see you're awake at last. What in thunder is the matter with you? You look as solemn as a mute at a funeral in the old days. Did your supper disagree with you, or what?”

“Nothing,” replied Jack, impatiently.

“It couldn't be less. Good-morning, princess. I hope you enjoyed your night's rest. You're looking as charming as ever, upon my word you are.”

“What a flatterer you are, sahib!” said the girl, giving him the googoo eye.

“Don't mention it. It's a failing that runs in the family. My father never met a pretty girl that he didn't want to kiss, and as they say that's catching, I am afflicted the same way myself.”

“What an amusing boy you are!” she replied, laughingly.

“That's another failing of mine, Miss Koket. I tried to run away with all the circuses that came our way under the impression that I was born for a clown. Hello, I see the Fakir has provided us with breakfast. What a capital fellow he is! I was just wondering if Jack and I would have to proceed on an empty stomach. Come on, let's eat.”

They stood around the stone, but Jack had no appetite.

"What in creation is the matter with you, old man? Why don't you pitch in?"

"I'm not hungry," replied Jack, shortly.

"Well, you will be by and by, so you had better put a few of those rice cakes in your pocket. I'm going to do so on general principles."

Koket's appetite did not seem to be at all affected. She ate and drank and seemed to be in excellent humor. They escorted her outside to the palanquin.

"Good-by, sahibs," she said. "And you, Sahib Jack, remember the ring. You may find it useful—to remember me by."

Then the bearers picked up the vehicle, and at the word of command from Foxi Fum, started off with it.

Jack watched the palanquin disappear in the jungle. Koket had taken his heart away with her. Shortly after the boys continued their journey, not heeding the warning given them by the Fakir. And while they were proceeding Rum Jum and Nagar were looking for them.

They met a couple of natives and upon inquiry found out that the village of Hyderabad was a few miles ahead, so the boys set out for it. They shortly struck another jungle. They had proceeded only a short distance through it when they heard a crash in the jungle near by and a deer sprang through the thicket pursued by a cheetah which sprang upon the deer. Sam leveled his rifle and killed the cheetah just as a mounted Hindoo dashed into the glade. Seeing the dead cheetah, the Hindoo cried:

"How dare you shoot my cheetah?"

"Sorry I made the mistake," said Sam.

"I am Ram Rusti, the rajah of this district. You are both my prisoners, and shall be taken to my castle."

"Hold on," interposed Jack. "We are Americans, and you have no right to detain us."

The rajah drew his sword and would have attacked the boys had not the Fakir of the jungle suddenly appeared before them. By this time the Hindoo's followers were also on the ground.

"These boys deserve your gratitude instead of your censure," said the Fakir, and then he told of Jack's saving the life of the rajah's daughter, upon hearing which he extended his hand to the boy and ordered two of his followers to surrender their horses to the boys. Jack turned to thank the Fakir when he perceived he was not in evidence.

The boys fell in behind the rajah and the party set out and soon struck the road which led to Hyderabad. When the village came in sight the river had to be crossed. A large barge served them this purpose, the horses swimming behind.

CHAPTER V.—Guests of the Rajah.

On their arrival at the castle, which was not really a castle, but a large and solid looking structure, occupying one end of the island, the boys were, at the Rajah's command, escorted to a splendidly furnished room, with narrow windows overlooking the river. The servant, after a respectful salaam, that is, bending his upper body forward and throwing out both arms till the thumbs touched, announced that he had been

placed at their service, and when wanted could be found outside the door.

"All right. We have no orders at present. Do we dine alone or with the Rajah?"

The Hindoo opined they would be served in their room. This proved to be the case. An hour later an appetizing meal, with plenty of curry in the chief dishes, was set before them, and they were waited on by their private servant or attendant. After the meal they asked the servant if they could walk about the island. That individual said he believed they were at liberty to make themselves at home, but before acting on it he suggested that they await the coming of the steward, whose name was Run-phaster. The boys agreed to this, and in a short time a very solemn and dignified Hindoo appeared and said he was glad to make the acquaintance of the young Feringhees. Jack told him that the pleasure was mutual.

"Is it true that you saved the life of the princess?" said Run-phaster.

"Yes, from a tiger in the jungle."

"Brave boys. And you also rescued my nephew, Foxi Fum?"

"Yes," nodded Jack.

"I shall remember you in my prayers to Brahma," said the solemn steward.

"I suppose, as head steward, you have a nice sinecure under the Rajah?"

"Alas, no! Do I look happy?"

He certainly looked very much the reverse.

"Not particularly," replied Jack.

"How can I be happy when the responsibilities of my position, as chief adviser to the Rajah, sit like a mountain upon my shoulders?"

"But you doubtless receive the comfort of a big salary."

"What is salary to a man when he stands in constant fear of losing his head?"

"How?" cried Jack, in surprise.

"A sudden melancholy seizes the Rajah at the full of each moon. He calls himself miserable and says it's the business of his chief steward—that's me—to make him happy. I do my best, but am not always successful. He has had several chief stewards within the last few years, and all of them have disappeared in a mysterious manner. I live in constant fear that it will be my turn next."

"I don't think I'd care to have your job," said Sam. "I'd just as soon work in a powder house."

"I'll tell you a good way to make the Rajah happy," said Jack.

"Ah, if you only would," said Run-phaster.

"Fill him full of good American whisky. Most men are happy when they have a jag on."

"Your idea is not bad. I'll try it at the next full moon; that is, if I survive this one."

"Where is he now?"

"In his private apartments. At any moment he may summon me to his presence and order me to make him happy."

"Do you expect to make a man happy with that face of yours?" said Sam. "Why don't you look pleasant?"

"Can a man in my position look happy?"

"The happier you look the more chance you have of pulling through. Couldn't you crack a joke or two and make him laugh?"

"I don't know any jokes," said the chief steward, lugubriously.

"I know a whole lot in my own language, but I don't think I could translate them into Hindoostanese so they would sound funny."

"I have consulted the stars with reference to the Rajah's complaint."

"What did the stars say?"

"That if he could procure the shirt of a happy man, and wear it till it fell to pieces, the cure would be complete."

"Then why don't you hunt up a happy man and get his shirt?" grinned Sam.

"I fear that a happy man does not exist in the Rajah's district."

"Wouldn't a happy boy do? I mean one whose shirt might fit the Rajah with a little opening up."

"Such a shirt might answer in a pinch."

"All right. Send to Bombay at once and have the Princess Koket brought back."

"To what purpose?"

"My friend Jack is dead gone on her. All that is necessary to make a happy boy is for her to marry him. Then he'll let you have his shirt, which you will at once put on the Rajah. If the cure doesn't work you can blame the stars," chuckled Sam.

At that moment an attendant appeared and said that his Highness desired the presence of his chief steward. Run-phaster made a motion of despair, as if he saw his finish in sight, and followed the messenger out of the room.

"Now let's go down and get a squint at the island," said Sam.

They went, but found little to interest or amuse them. Jack declared that if he had to remain a week at the castle the Rajah would have nothing on him in the way of a grouch. On their way back to the house they saw a boat with two Hindoos making for the landing on the island. As they drew near, one of the Rajah's guards warned them off.

"Gee!" cried Sam, "see who's coming."

Jack easily recognized Rum Jum and Nagar. That part of the Fakir's warning referring to them, as well as to Dharwar, immediately occurred to the boys.

"We don't want to have anything more to do with those chaps," he said.

"I should say not," said Sam.

Rum Jum rowed as close to the landing as he dared, and then held a parley with the guard. He wanted to know if two Feringhees had come to the island in the Rajah's company a few hours before. The guard declined to make any statement on the subject. Rum Jum, who had secured the information along the route of the hunting party, persisted in asking questions of the guard, but as it was against the Rajah's orders to give out any information about anything, except on the responsibility of the chief steward, the guard threatened to shoot Rum Jum if he didn't sheer off. The rascally guide, finding that he could make no headway with the guard, and having no desire to be shot at, turned the boat shoreward. He was satisfied that the two boys were on the island, so he and Nagar stood watch by turn so as to join them when they left the island. Jack and Sam, from the shelter of the trees, watched the movements of the guide and his companion,

and judged that the fellows were going to stay around the landing until they left the island.

"We will have to play a march on them somehow," said Jack. "We can find our way to the temple of the Thousand Eyes somehow without any aid from them. The chief service we expected of Rum Jum was to pilot us through the big jungle. He and Nagar left us in the midst of it, either accidentally or by design, and if we hadn't come across the princess' party, and thereby enjoyed the hospitality of the Fakir, it might have gone hard with us. Since the Fakir told us that the rascals are not to be trusted, we must try and give them the shake. It may take us twice as long to make our way to the temple where the treasure is without them, but it will probably be the safer way."

"I agree with you," nodded Sam. "We'll consult with Run-phaster about quitting the island on the quiet when our visit is up. We'll have to do it after dark, and by way of the opposite shore."

The boys remained three days. Each morning they were invited to a private audience with the Rajah. His face looked sour and the boys endeavored to cheer him up with stories about the States. They succeeded in interesting him for the time being, and he treated them with unusual favor. On the third day he invited them to visit his place in Allabad and pass a week there. He said his daughter would then be on hand to entertain them. Jack thanked him and said they would be glad to avail themselves of the invitation. The Rajah was curious to learn what business they had in that part of India. Jack said they were simply enjoying a short vacation and putting in the time seeing the sights. In course of the conversation he told the Rajah that they expected to visit the Temple of the Thousand Eyes.

"We heard in Bombay that it was a wonderful old ruin, and well worthy of a visit," said Jack.

The Rajah's brow darkened and the fierceness returned to his eyes.

"I would advise you not to go there," he said. "Many have done so and never have come back."

"What prevented them?"

"Who shall say?" replied the potentate. "It may be that Kalee still haunts the ruins of her chief temple, and devours those rash enough to invade her resting place."

"Kalee was the goddess of the Thugs or stranglers, once a power in India; but the sect has been entirely exterminated by the British," said Jack.

"A tree may seem to be dead above the ground, and yet its roots still have life. So it is with the Thugs. There are yet many devotees of the faith who practice their art at intervals when circumstances favor them. They do it at the risk of their lives. These are the faithful who are devoted to Kalee, and she still thrives on their fanaticism, though most of her temples have been leveled to the ground, and her chief abode, the Temple of the Thousand Eyes, is a deserted ruin. It is situated just over the border of my dominions in the district of the Nawab of Maler Kootla. The Nawab and I are not on good terms. Many years ago we had trouble over a large sum of gold—\$250,000, in guineas—sent to the Nawab by Mu-

hammed Shahab, as indemnity growing out of a petty war. The gold, while in transit from Bombay, where it had come by ship, passed through my district. It disappeared with its bearers in some unaccountable way, and was never afterward heard of. The Nawab accused me of ambushing the bearers and stealing the gold. A man of honor would not do such a thing, and I indignantly denied the accusation. We almost went to war over it. Indeed, but for the good offices of the then English Governor-general, there probably would have been war. The difficulty was settled, but the Nawab never has been friendly since."

The boys looked at each other when the Rajah spoke about the \$250,000, which corresponded with the \$250,000 in gold they were after. The fact that the Nawab of Maler Kootla might have a claim on it did not worry them. The indemnities demanded by the winners of petty Indian wars were more or less acquired on the hold-up plan, your money or your life. A great number of years had elapsed since the treasure in question disappeared, and it had been forgotten by the Nawab. If it really was hidden in the ruinous Temple of the Thousand Eyes, doubtless the Thugs were at the bottom of the theft. No tiger—accounted the most cunning of all beasts in the quest of prey—could approach its victim more stealthily than the Thug.

He banked on craft and treachery, but being a rank coward, he rarely worked alone. At the time of our story these scoundrels had been pretty nearly all rooted out by the British, but nevertheless they still existed, though the traveler on the highways and byways was practically safe from them. Their headquarters was at the ruins of the Temple of the Thousand Eyes, which once upon a time had shone with magnificence. It was built for and dedicated to the goddess Kalee, and here her statue still stood—a thing of terror to the natives and of curiosity to the tourist.

After supper that day Jack and Sam, provided with two small hampers of food, left the island under the shades of night and landed on the shore opposite the regular landing, where Rum Jum and Nagar were waiting for them.

CHAPTER VI.—The Four Rascals.

The boys were now on the wrong side of the river to reach the temple, which was quite a distance off, but they did not doubt they would find plenty of chances to recross. The head steward had told them that they would reach a village by following a road half a mile from the river. On the outskirts of the village was a Hindoo inn, where they could put up for the night, but Runphaster warned them to be on their guard, as the proprietor was known to be a great rascal, who was believed to be in league with a disreputable bunch of low-caste natives.

The steward hardly thought the inn-keeper would dare attempt any game with them, because they were Feringhees, or next door to it. Still he was not to be trusted. The boys started straight for the road, reached it across a series of cultivated fields, and turned in the direction of the village. It was a longer walk than they had counted on, but the place hove in sight at last under a brilliant star-lit sky, with the full moon

just rising in all her glory, and casting their moving shadows ahead of them on the road.

It was after ten o'clock, and the only light in sight came from the window of the inn. The door was open, as well as the windows, to admit the night air, and the boys walked in, with their rifles under their arms. At a table on one side of the room sat four as rascally looking Hindoos as Jack and Sam had ever seen, and in the course of their Bombay experience they had run against some pretty tough specimens. They looked curiously at the boys and at the rifles. They judged that the lads had come to that part of the country to shoot in the jungle, sizing them up as English tourists. The boys, however, had no game with them and were on the opposite side of the river from the nearest jungle, and a considerable distance from the big one near the base of the mountain range.

Altogether they could not make out why the boys had come to that village. The more burly-looking of the quartet jumped up and addressed them in very fair English, not supposing they understood the native language.

"You are Feringhee travelers?" he said inquiringly.

"We are Americans from Bombay," replied Jack, in English.

"You have been hunting?" the man continued.

"Yes," replied Jack.

"What have you killed?"

"A monkey, several birds and a tiger," replied Jack, making no mention of the cheetah, which he knew would have excited the curiosity of the man. "Are you the inn-keeper?"

"Such is the fact, young sahib. You wish to stay here for the night?"

"Yes. We want a room if you have one unoccupied."

"You shall have it. And supper, I suppose?"

"No, we have eaten all we want for the present. You can serve us with breakfast in the morning."

The eyes of the three men at the table were riveted on the ring Jack had received from the princess, and the inn-keeper himself cast frequent glances at it. They saw that it was a very valuable one, worth two or three thousand rupees—a silver coin the equivalent of thirty-two cents in American money. Their mouths watered at the sight of it. A Feringhee who could afford to wear such a ring must be wealthy, they argued. Doubtless he carried several Bank of England notes about his person, and his companion might be supposed to be pretty well provided with money, too. These boys were going to put up at the inn for the night. They must be tired after a long day's jaunt even on horseback, consequently they would sleep well. The thought occurred to each of the rascals that here was a chance to fatten their slim resources that might not happen again.

It would not do to rob them and let them go on their way to complain to the head man of the village in the morning, who would start an investigation which would not be healthy for the proprietor of the inn, or themselves if they were caught. The visitors must be put out of the way for good. Being late in the evening, no one had seen them enter the inn, therefore no suspicion would rest on the inn-keeper and themselves. If they were later inquired for, as would probably

be the case, why the four men could swear they had not seen them. When in answer to the landlord's inquiry about their horses, they said they had left them at the village at the foot of the range. The bunch, though manifestly astonished that the boys should have left their animals so far behind, were greatly pleased for the horses would have been evidence against them, and given them trouble to get rid of.

The foregoing was duly canvassed in their own lingo, even while the boys were in the room, for they had no suspicion that Jack and Sam understood the language of the country. In this way the boys were made wise to the peril that threatened them, and being plucky young fellows, they determined to give the four rascals the surprise of their lives.

"Run-phaster made no mistake when he told us the proprietor of this inn was a big rascal," said Sam in a low tone. "They're going to do us up if they can. That ring you got from Koket is what excited their greed. I saw them looking at it and sizing up its value in their minds. It is probably worth more money than they ever had in all their lives, and they can't resist the temptation of getting it from you. They think we are carrying a bunch of \$25 notes besides."

"I'm going down to listen to their plans," said Jack. "You lie on your couch with both rifles and watch the door while I am away."

He removed his shoes and slipped downstairs. Fifteen minutes passed away, and then Jack returned.

"What a blessing it is that we have the language down pat," he said, after examining the door for a fastening and finding there was none. "I heard every word that passed between them."

"And they haven't the least idea that we understand any other tongue than English," said Sam. "Well, what are they going to do? When may we expect a visit from them?"

"They are in no hurry to proceed, as they have all night before them. The three rascals who were at the table have gone outside to select a suitable spot to dig a deep hole to place our bodies in after they have put a knife in our breasts. They expect to be away the best part of an hour, which, they figure, will give us lots of time to get into a sound sleep. When they return the job will be pulled off."

"I hope not. The hole will come in handy for themselves if they get a ball from our Remingtons in their bodies. Aren't they afraid of the guns?"

"No. They expect we will stand them against the wall, possibly out of our reach."

"They'll never be able to reach us in this room, with the moon shining, making things almost as bright as day," said Sam. "We'll lie down with our rifles beside us, ready cocked for business. The moment they approach our beds we'll open fire. It is my opinion they are going to get badly shocked."

"They'll deserve all they get. They think no more of carving us up than if we were a pair of wild animals. I dare say they've each killed more than one man in their time. I don't fancy the idea of starting a private graveyard, even with such chaps as these. They are human beings like ourselves. But it seems to be a question of our lives or theirs."

"It sure is. And they will be the aggressors."

The boys talked in whispers, for they did not know but the landlord might be listening at the door.

"You'd better go and lie down on your bunk," said Sam. "The landlord is sure to take a peep at us in advance to see if we're asleep. It might spoil everything if he found us talking together."

Jack thought Sam's suggestion a prudent one, so he adopted it. Hardly had he stretched himself out, with his cocked rifle beside him, than the door opened softly and a dark-skinned face looked in. It was the landlord. He stood and listened intently. The boys watched him covertly. They breathed in a way that they hoped would convince him they were asleep. He stood in the door fully five minutes, like a graven image, then he disappeared, shutting the door after him. Ten minutes passed. That short interval seemed like half an hour to the boys, who felt somewhat nervous at the prospect ahead, though they believed they would come out all right.

To say the truth, neither liked the idea of shooting their enemies. Then the door opened again, and to the surprise of the boys a young Hindoo girl appeared. She shut the door and glided over to Jack's couch.

"Wake, sahib, wake!" she whispered, shaking his arm.

"Who are you and what do you want?" asked Jack, sitting up.

The girl had spoken in English, and Jack replied in kind.

"Get up. Your life and your companion's are in peril. The men you saw below intend to murder and then rob you. Three of them are away at the foot of the garden digging a hole to put you both in. They will soon return. Get up, wake your friend and follow me. I will lead you out of the house by the back way. Then you must go on to the village and try and find shelter there. To remain here is death to you."

Jack jumped up, and so did Sam. It wasn't necessary for them to ask the girl any questions, for she only told them what they already knew. Taking their baskets of food in one hand and their rifles in the other, they followed her out of the room and down the corridor, the three proceeding as softly as shadows.

CHAPTER VII.—A Disagreeable Encounter.

At the end of the corridor was a door. The girl opened it, passed through and held it for the boys to follow. Facing them was a staircase.

"Follow," whispered the girl.

The stairs creaked under their weight, but they soon reached the foot. Here they found themselves in the kitchen. The girl opened a door into the yard.

"Go," she said. "Take that direction across the fields, and if the men in the garden do not see you, you will be safe."

"You are a good girl to warn us," said Jack, "but we already knew what was ahead of us. In pointing a way for us to escape you have doubtless saved the lives of the inn-keeper and his three accomplices."

The girl received his statement in some surprise.

"I understand, sahib. You suspected the men, and were only pretending sleep when I came to help you. You would have shot them with your guns. But go, go, before they return from the foot of the garden," she said, earnestly.

"What is your name, little one? You have done us a good turn, and I would remember you."

"Litchee."

"Is the inn-keeper any relation of yours?"

"He is my uncle."

"You ought to cut loose from him, for he is a scoundrel of the first water."

"I have no place to go, and he treats me well."

"I dare say you do all the work about the inn, and get little or no pay for it."

"Yes, sahib. Now do go."

"Good-by, then. Here in an English crown piece for yourself. It is equal to about four rupees. And here is a kiss."

The boys then crossed the yard, their figures standing boldly out in the moonlight. They were not seen, however, and presently gained the shelter of some trees. In a few minutes they were in the village, but not a soul seemed to be stirring at that hour.

"What shall we do, Sam—wake somebody us and ask for shelter?" said Jack.

"No. Let's go right on down the road till we put a couple of miles at least between us and the village, then we will look for some place to anchor for the night," replied Sam.

So they went on. Half an hour later they struck a Hindoo farm and took shelter in a small outhouse filled with hay, on top of which they made their bed. They slept till well into the morning without being disturbed. Leaving the outhouse, they went over to a rude well and sat down to partake of some of the food they had brought from the island. Here they were observed by the women and children of the house. All came flocking toward them, making friendly gestures. Jack addressed them in their own tongue, much to their surprise, and told them they were traveling around to see the country. They were invited to the house and treated to fresh honey and fruits. The two women seemed pleased to have the honor of entertaining two Feringhee boys, whom they judged to be persons of some importance from the ring Jack wore. The husband and another Hindoo were out in the fields at work, and the boys did not meet them. After passing a pleasant hour with the family, Jack and Sam took to the road again, after learning that another small village lay about six miles ahead.

They walked slowly on account of the heat of the sun.

They reached the next village in the course of a couple of hours and inquired their way for an inn. The landlord extended a hearty welcome to them, and they sat down at a table beside an open window to rest and drink a small flagon of sweet wine, which tasted good to their parched tongues. They decided to take their noonday meal here before they went on. While they sat there a pretty Nautch girl, carrying in her hand a small basket of eggs, came along and stood outside. Seeing two Feringhee boys, she bobbed to them.

A big boy, who appeared to be her companion, produced a kind of musical pipe from his girdle

and began to play on it. The girl placed the basket on the ground and began a native dance, which she performed in a very graceful way. At the end of it she bobbed again and picked up the basket. The boy started another tune, and she commenced whirling around like a sort of teetotum. On her head was placed a wheel, from the spokes of which hung silken cords with noosed ends. While whirling rapidly in circles, she took an egg from the basket and placed it in the noose, until the whole of the eggs were thus disposed of.

The feat was very clever in itself, but was not to be compared to that which followed, for she took the eggs from their rest one one by one, increasing her momentum as she did so, until all the eggs were replaced in the basket, quite uninjured. A false movement, a single act of awkwardness, would have caused the eggs to clash together and break. The boys applauded her, and each threw her a rupee. Then her companion gave a wonderful exhibition of juggling. A crowd had collected to witness all these feats, and at their conclusion some of those present threw the performers a silver piece called an anna, worth about two cents. Jack and Sam contributed each a six-pence to the young juggler, and he and the girl went on their way greatly enriched by the generosity of the foreigners. After the midday meal the boys resumed their journey toward the Temple of the Thousand Eyes. They had received directions how to reach it, but had been strongly advised not to go there. The inn-keeper was particularly earnest in his warning. While admitting that it was supposed to be a deserted old ruin, he said that the impression generally prevailed that the goddess Kalee was always there, and devoured any visitor who was rash enough to enter the building.

The boys laughed at the idea of a stone or wooden idol devouring anything. The inn-keeper said that it wasn't the figure of Kalee that did anything, but the spirit of the goddess which dwelt within the image. Jack tried to convince him that there was no such thing—that all the graven images that existed, or ever had existed, in India, amounted to nothing more than senseless representations of somebody's fancy. The Hindoo, however, was too deeply soaked in the religious fanaticism of his race to accept any statement from the boy.

"I have warned you, young Feringhee," he said solemnly. "If you despise my words you are likely to regret it when too late."

Those were his final words on the subject, and they had very little effect on the boys, who were not to be turned aside from their quest of a quarter of a million in gold by the bugaboo of Kalee. So on they went, passing through a number of villages during the next few days, and having no cause to find fault with the treatment they received from the natives or the proprietors of the inns at which they stopped.

At length they reached the border of the Rajah's district and entered the dominions of the Nawab. They had crossed the river at a ferry and were now drawing near their journey's end.

"We should reach the village of Nincumpoor before dark," said Jack, "and by making an early start in the morning we ought to arrive at the Temple of the Thousand Eyes by noon."

"I shall be glad to get there and have the job over with," said Sam.

"You talk as if you thought all we had to do after we arrive at the temple was to go right to the exact spot where the gold is and take possession of it. I am thinking we shall have a job finding it."

"But Dharwar gave you a diagram of the cellar where it lies buried."

"Dharwar's diagram may amount to nothing. It seems to run in my mind that the Fakir warned us against him when he told us to beware of Rum Jum and Nagar."

Sam admitted that he had the same impression, but he could not remember what the Fakir said on the subject. The Fakir had given them a very definite warning, as the reader knows, but as the boys had forgotten it it was clear that a power stronger than the Fakir's was drawing the boys toward the temple. They reached the village of Nincumpoor about sunset, and found their way to the best inn in the place. They engaged a room with supper, and breakfast in the morning, and arranged with the proprietor to refill their empty basket with food, for they could not expect to find anything to eat anywhere in the vicinity of the temple, which was situated in the midst of a small jungle, not often traversed by strangers, or the natives, for that matter, since the fatal power of Kalee was believed to hover over the whole place.

In due time their evening meal was served to them in a corner of the public room, beside an open window, and they were feeling in excellent spirits, when suddenly the window was darkened by two Hindoo faces, and a voice said:

"Ah, sahibs, we have overtaken you at last, and just in time to render you the chief service you engaged us for. Brahma be praised for this lucky meeting."

It was Rum Jum who spoke, and his rascally countenance seemed to shine with the greatest pleasure. Beside him stood Nagar, with a sardonic grin on his disreputable countenance. The boys gave a start as they recognized the men whom they thought they had shaken for good. The meeting apparently boded them on good.

CHAPTER VIII.—The Temple of the Thousand Eyes.

Jack deemed it advisable to hide their real sentiments toward the rascals. They were too far in the interior to come to an open rupture with Rum Jum and his companion.

"You are nice chaps," he said to the men. "You went off and left us by ourselves in the jungle, taking the fool with you, and if it had not been for good luck we might have been in the stomach of some wild beast before morning."

"It wasn't our fault, sahib. It has been a puzzle to us how we lost you. We spent most of the night and part of next morning looking for you in the jungle. Then the storm came on and we had to take shelter from it. Believing you had reached Bulacoor by yourselves, we went on there, but got no trace of you until we met a native who told us he saw two boys sailing along the river on a dead tree. Satisfied you were the boys, we followed the stream, but failed to catch up with you. On our way to Hyderabad, where we

thought you might have gone, we learned that you had joined a hunting party of the Rajah of the district. Knowing that he was sojourning at his island castle, we went on to the landing and tried to communicate with you, but the Rajah's guard would not answer our questions. We went back to the landing expecting to see you in a day or two. When you didn't come we inquired of one of the Rajah's servants who came from the island to get something for the steward, and he told us you had left two nights before, by way of the opposite shore. We followed your trail, but though we constantly heard of you being ahead, we never could catch up with you until now. I swear by Brahma I am telling you the truth."

Jack believed him.

"What you say, Rum Jum, may be all right, but you put us to a lot of inconvenience. You have come when we have little use for you, for we have received all the directions we need to take us to the temple, he said.

"Ah, sahib, you need us more now than you did anywhere except in the big jungle. It is true it is only half a day's journey to the temple, but without one of us you never could find it in the jungle which conceals it. We will take you directly to it in the morning. Had we not fortunately found you before you started on alone you might have perished in a fruitless effort to find the temple. Be glad, then, sahib, that we are here. We promise you that all your troubles are at an end."

It was clear that Rum Jum and Nagar did not intend to be shaken by the boys at this stage of the situation, so Jack and Sam had to pretend that they were pleased with their company. Rum Jum then bade them good-by for the time being, saying that he and Nagar would be on hand early in the morning to pilot them on the final stage of their journey.

"We've got to put up with the rascals," remarked Jack, after their guide and Nagar had gone. "However, we'll be on our guard against any treachery on their part. If they show the cloven foot we'll hand them something to think about."

"I'm sorry they have turned up," said Sam. "I'd prefer to take the chances of the jungle without them."

"So would I, for I thoroughly distrust both of them; but I don't see that we can help ourselves now."

When they went to bed that night they barricaded the door, for they feared a nocturnal intrusion from Rum Jum and Nagar, but nothing of that kind happened. The scoundrels had no intention to harm them. They were under orders to get the boys to the temple, and deliver them to the two priests who dwelt there in secret. They knew what would happen after that, but they would have no hand in it. That night Jack had another vivid dream about Koket. He saw Foxi Fum and the bearers conveying her back from Bombay to Allabad in the palanquin. The party was passing through the big jungle when they were set upon by a bunch of natives in ambush. Koket and Foxi Fum were made prisoners, but the palanquin bearers were killed to a man. The natives picked up the palanquin and carried it through the jungle to the stream into which

Jack and Sam had been swept by the storm. Foxi Fum was forced to go along. When the stream was reached a native covered boat was seen tied to the shore. The princess was forced into the cabin with Foxi Fum, the palanquin partially dismantled, placed on the deck, and the natives started down the river under sail. Then the vision faded out, and Jack awoke to find that morning had come. He awoke Sam and told him about his dream.

"It was a strange dream," said Sam.

"I never had one that seemed more real," said Jack.

"Do you think there is anything in it?"

"I don't know. People have often dreamed of events that have actually taken place many miles away."

"I know; but I hardly think a bunch of natives would dare monkey with the daughter of the Bengal Tiger. They say he has a long reach, and what he wouldn't do to such rascals is hardly worth talking about. He would probably boil them in oil over a slow fire, or treat them to some other excruciating torture. The Rajah is a tough nut to run against even when the blues are not on him."

"He surely would handle them without gloves if he caught them."

"He'd catch them, don't you worry. His daughter is his choicest possession, and he'd send men all over India looking for her."

"If what I saw in my dream has actually happened, you can take it from me that the natives were acting for somebody as powerful as the Rajah himself."

"Think so."

"Yes. Natives never would dare commit such an outrage on their own responsibility. The girl is a beauty, and I wouldn't be surprised if she has many suitors. Some neighboring Rajah who has failed to win her, or her father's consent, might have adopted this kidnaping scheme to get her into his power and force her to marry him whether she wanted to or not."

"Maybe the Nawab of this district, who is unfriendly with the Bengal Tiger, has captured the princess to get back at her father."

"If he has there'll be war as sure as you live."

"The British would probably interfere and patch matters up. They are the real bosses of the country."

The appearance of Rum Jum put an end to the conversation.

"The morning meal is awaiting the sahibs," he said, obsequiously.

The boys went downstairs and found breakfast ready. They ate it. Rum Jum told them he had taken the liberty to order horses for them to take them to the temple. That suited the boys first rate, as the price asked was reasonable. Nagar took charge of the baskets of food, and Rum Jum offered to carry the rifles, but Jack and Sam refused to part with them. Mounting the animals, they started, with Rum Jum trotting in advance and Nagar fetching up in the rear. The country through which they passed for the greater part of the forenoon was fertile and cultivated. They passed many houses and two small villages, then Rum Jum turned off from the beaten track, and from that time they found the country growing less interesting and more sparsely settled.

Finally they came to the edge of the jungle surrounding the temple. A tributary of the river which has figured in this story ran through the jungle, cutting it into two parts. Rum Jum followed it a part of the way, and then plunged into the tall grass to the left, and for half an hour they were forced to proceed slowly.

"How much further have we to go, Rum Jum?" asked Jack, beginning to suspect that the rascal was not guiding them aright.

"We are almost there, sahib," he replied, with a grin of satisfaction.

And so it proved. Five minutes later they came out into what had once been a broad opening, but was now overgrown by tangled vegetation, and right before them they saw the sun shining on the temple.

It did not look near as ruinous, on the outside front at least, as they expected. It was solidly built, with ornamental columns at the ends and on either side of the entrance, which possessed no door. They were two windows without sashes on either side of the door. The roof was supported at each corner by a stone elephant, and was raised several feet above the coping, probably for purposes of ventilation.

"The sahibs will dismount and tie their horses," said Rum Jum, complacently.

The boys did so. With the entrance of the Hindoo temple before them, the two boys rushed eagerly forward. Jack, in the lead, stepped upon the huge slab of stone which lay in his path. It revolved under his weight and he disappeared from view.

CHAPTER IX.—In the Hands of Their Enemies.

Jack landed all in a heap on a mass of dried vegetation. It was fortunate that he hit something soft, for the floor and walls of the vault were made of stone. He could not know that the dry vegetation had been placed there designedly to save him from breaking his neck. Not especially him, but any victim whom the concealed priests of the temple desired to get into their power. As the victim would be needed for the annual sacrifice to Kallee, soon to take place, it was necessary that he should not be injured in any material way. After dumping the boy into the depths, the stone revolved back into its former apparently solid position. Sam managed to stop himself just in the nick of time to avoid going down with his friend.

As the stone fell back into place he gazed in stupefied consternation at it.

"Great sardines!" he ejaculated. "I wonder how far down Jack went, and whether he's been hurt or not!"

He received an answer to both questions, but not in the way he expected. As he turned to address Rum Jum, who was close behind him, he received a push that sent him staggering upon the slab. It revolved once more, and Sam landed beside Jack. When the stone revolved back again, darkness reigned in the vault.

"Is that you, Sam?" asked Jack.

"Yes, it's me, all right. This is a nice fix we're in. This is the work of Rum Jum, the traitor."

"How do you know that?" said Jack. "He wasn't near me when the stone gave way under my weight."

"Oh, he knew all about the trap. You went down without any help from him, but with me it was different. He pushed me onto the slab, and here I am up against it like yourself."

"Do you think we have been dumped down here to perish?"

"I'm afraid we have."

"What is the object of it. Is that rascal after my ring?"

"Probably. It represents a fortune to him. I wish you had kept it in your pocket instead of on your finger. It is too valuable to flash around in public. Even in a big city you would run a chance of being knocked out for it."

"Maybe we can escape from this place. Wait till I strike a match and look around," said Jack.

He struck a match, and when the flame illuminated the vault they found that it was not large. Their hopes sank when they failed to find any indication of an exit. The walls were of solid stone, and the floor as well, underneath the vegetation.

"If this refuse hadn't been here we might have broken our necks, or at least an arm or a leg, or perhaps both. This is a fierce place to be imprisoned in. A few days here will put us on the starvation list."

"When we are too weak to use our guns, which have followed us in, Rum Jum will find an easy way to come down, go through us, and then leave us to our fate."

"What an infernal scoundrel he is!" cried Jack.

"And what a villain Dharwar is, too!" said Sam. "The warning words of the Fakir rise plainly before me now. I don't see how we could have forgotten them."

"I remember them myself now. He said the gold we were after was in this temple just as Dharwar told us, but it was the bait used by the votaries of Kalee, the few surviving Thugs, to get us into their power."

"The landlord of the inn where we saw the Nautch dancer told us we would regret coming here, and he wasn't far wrong. I certainly regret continuing our hunt for the treasure, and I guess you do, too."

"I don't think this would have happened if Rum Jum and Nagar had not rejoined us. It was our misfortune that they did so."

"This treasure hunt was a piece of foolishness from the start. This is probably our finish. We'll never see Bombay again."

They continued to talk over their unenviable situation for some time, then they became conscious of a feeling of oppression, as though the air was becoming foul from their breathing up the oxygen. With some alarm Jack called his companion's attention to it. They were seized with dizziness and nausea, and in a minute or two were gasping for breath. Inside of five minutes both dropped unconscious on the vegetation.

Their condition was not due to lack of oxygen, but to a poisonous vapor which had been blown into the vault through a hole—they had not noticed while inspecting their prison cell. The two priests had done that in order to secure them without trouble. When they calculated that time enough had elapsed to accomplish their purpose, they signaled to Rum Jum, and that worthy

caused the stone to partially revolve on its nicely adjusted axis, he and Nagar catching and detaining it before it went completely over. That let the obnoxious gas escape, and enabled them to take a look at their victims. The boys lay wholly at their mercy now. A door artfully concealed in the inner wall of the vault now opened and the two priests appeared. They finally handed the two rifles up to Rum Jum, and then each raising one of the boys in his arms, bore him off through the door, which closed behind them.

Rum Jum and Nagar then let the stone fall back into its place. They walked around to a door in the back of the temple and made their way into the edifice. The greater part of the building comprised one big room, which had at one time presented an appearance of considerable magnificence. It had no ceiling, being open under the protecting roof, raised, as we have already mentioned, by the stone elephant at each corner. The walls and columns were covered with painted eyes, through which the goddess Kalee was supposed to look in order to see all that was going on in the temple. There were so many of these eyes that the temple got its name from them.

A quarter of the interior was shut off by a faded red curtain, once of imposing magnificence, which shut off the idol room from the big room where, in the good old days when the Thuggee flourished, Kalee's humble votaries assembled to do her homage, and witness the sacrifice of human beings on the altar before the goddess. The flooring was of solid stone, which had echoed the tread of many tourists who had managed to pass the entrance without disappearing into the vault as Jack had done. That is easily explained. The big slab, which was nicely balanced on its axis, was held in place by two heavy bolts. Until these bolts were withdrawn from their sockets it could not revolve. The priests were always on the watch for a victim. Tourists accompanied by responsible guides were not molested. Any one conveyed by Rum Jum was considered fair game, as he was a Thug at heart, and worked in collusion with Dharwar, also a Thug by instinct. Both of them, with Nagar, stood in with the priests of the temple, and could be depended on to do all in their power for the good of the cause.

The priests were shrewd but ignorant Hindoos, who really believed in the spiritual existence of Kalee, and had devoted their lives to her service, confident that it would bring them eternal happiness after death. Jack and Sam were carried to a sort of pen in the far end of the cellar under the temple and locked in. There were a number of these pens. Half a century before they were usually crowded with victims for the annual sacrifice as that great festival approached. Now they rarely held a single prisoner each, even on the sacrificial day itself. Until Jack and Sam were enticed to the temple not a victim had been secured for that year's secret festival, and the pens were vacant.

That is why the priests had sent out a C. Q. D. message to Dharwar to chase something along their way, or there was no saying what Kalee would do to her faithful adherents. Just why Dharwar had the nerve to pick out the American

consul's nephew and his friend Sam is not quite clear, but it might have been to wipe out an old grudge the Hindoo had against the consul. The only feasible way he saw for getting the boys to go so far into the interior was to fire their imaginations with the story of the treasure. This he did, but as Jack wouldn't bite the old rascal gave him proof that the \$250,000 in gold was actually hidden in the temple. The old villain felt he could safely do that, for once the boys reached the temple, the priests, assisted by Rum Jum and Nagar, would see that they did not get away.

While the boys lay unconscious in their noisome cell from the effects of the poisonous gas they had inhaled in the vault, there came fresh arrivals at the temple. Jack's dream was not a shadow of a future event, but a past one. Everything he saw in his sleep had actually taken place some days before. The outrage had been planned by the Nawab, whose youngest son had fallen in love with Koket, and was pining away because there wasn't the slightest chance of his getting her for his wife by fair means. The Rajah, her father, would have as soon seen her in her grave as connected by marriage with his old enemy, the Nawab.

And the Nawab knew that. His son, however, was the light of his eyes, and he was willing to take any risk for his sake. Learning that the princess had gone to Bombay on a week's visit, and would duly return through the jungle, he called one of his devoted henchmen into consultation, and the abduction of the girl was decided upon. It was a dangerous job, but the personal servants of the Nawab were at all times ready to lay down their lives, if necessary, for their master or his only son. By rapid action they hoped to carry the scheme through all right, and they had succeeded.

Being now within the boundaries of the Nawab's territory, they felt quite safe with their two prisoners, and as their provisions had given out, they ventured to seek the temporary seclusion of the Temple of the Thousand Eyes, where they had reason to know they would get what they wanted. So the boat was tied up at the edge of the stream, within a short distance of the temple, and the palanquin being restored to its original shape, the princess was obliged to enter it, and the party, with Foxi Fum bound so he couldn't escape, proceeded straight to the temple of the dreaded Kalee.

CHAPTER X.—The Priest of the Temple.

Jack was the first to come to his senses. At first he was somewhat dazed by his situation, but gradually recollection asserted itself and he remembered what had happened to him and Sam. As the vault was as dark as the cell he was now in, he naturally supposed that he and his friend were still there.

"Sam, where are you?" he said, but got no response.

Then he realized that he was lying on the hard stone floor instead of the soft, dry vegetation. He got up and, feeling around, soon discovered Sam lying against the wall.

"Sam, what's the matter with you?" he said.

Sam heard him not, and so remained quiet and motionless. Jack became alarmed about him until by feeling his face he saw he was warm. Then he felt of his heart and found that beating in a normal way.

"It's funny we should have been half suffocated by the air in this place, and now it seems different," he said.

He lighted a match.

"Hello, we're not in the same place. There is no dry vegetation here on the floor, nothing but the bare slabs. After we became unconscious we must have been brought here. I suppose we're somewhere in the cellar of the temple, for it's as dark as pitch. There's a door. I'm afraid it's locked or bolted on the outside."

Jack tried it and found it was well secured.

"We are prisoners, that's certain," he thought. "I wonder what kind of rascality Rum Jum is up to."

Suddenly he thought of his valuable ring.

"The villain has taken that—no, he hasn't," he added, as he felt it.

The ruby eyes of the bug were glowing like small, live coals in the dark.

"I thought diamonds were the only stones that glistened in the dark. When Koket placed this ring on my finger I did not dream that Sam and I would run into such a scrape as this. And yet we received warning enough about this temple. But they did not refer to Rum Jum, but to the diabolical influence of Kalee. These Hindoos are an awful ignorant and superstitious people in spite of the advancement of knowledge through the missionaries and the English government. The idea of them supposing that their heathen deities have power for either good or ill. Just think how, in the old days, they used to throw themselves in front of the great wooden wheels of the Juggernaut, as it was drawn through their village, and allow themselves to be crushed into a pulp, under the impression that death that way would ensure their going straight to Nirvana, or whatever other name they called their heaven. It is a mighty good thing for them that the British came here and put a stop to most of their preposterous practices."

Just then Sam moved, opened his eyes and sat up.

"Hello, Sam; come around, have you?" said Jack.

"Yes. Whatever it was put me out, the bad air or something else, seems to have gone. I can breathe all right now. I suppose you were down and out yourself for a while?"

"I was. We've been moved from the place we fell into to a kind of cell in the cellar of the temple."

"Is that so? How do you know?"

"By lighting a match. There's a door in this place, but it's locked."

"We are still prisoners?"

"Nothing surer from the looks of things."

"Have we been put here to die by degrees?"

"Possibly, but I can't say for certain."

"Of course, Rum Jum and Nagar are responsible for all this. We've been cleaned out, I suppose?"

"I haven't. I've still got my ring and my money."

"I see I've got my money, too. Doesn't it

strike you as funny that we haven't been robbed? What other object could those rascals have in view? Robbery is the purpose of nearly all crime. The rascals have nothing against us to account for their actions on the ground of revenge alone. It is also absurd to think that they would postpone robbing us until after we were dead. Being senseless, we were wholly in their power, and the natural thing for them to do would be to take all we had and clear out. How about our rifles?"

"They are not in this place."

"But they didn't take my cartridge belt."

"Nor mine, either."

"I suppose they were satisfied with what were in the magazines. Have you looked this place over thoroughly to see if there was a loophole through which we might get away?"

"No. I only tried the door."

"Then let us— Hello, somebody is coming. I can hear footsteps approaching."

The footsteps came directly toward the cell. Through the crevices of the door they saw a light shining. Then a small section of the upper part of the door was opened, a lamp was held so as to illuminate the interior of the cell, and the boys saw a strange Hindoo face observing them. The newcomer, who had doubtless been told by Rum Jum that the boys understood Hindoo-tan-ese, spoke to them in that tongue. He showed a basket containing food, one of their own, by the way, through the opening, together with a flagon of sweet wine, and told them it was their dinner.

"Who are you?" demanded Jack.

"Ackbar, the chief priest of this temple," was the reply.

"I thought this temple was deserted and not used for religious purposes any more."

"As long as Kalee sits on her throne above, the temple cannot be deserted."

"How many more are there of you chaps?"

"One other, Obrie, my assistant."

"I suppose you are standing in with Rum Jum and Nagar?"

"Nay; their caste is lower than ours. They are our servants while they remain here."

"Why have we been made prisoners? Do you know that we are free-born Americans, attached to the American consulate at Bombay. The consul is my uncle. If we are harmed there will be an investigation through the British authorities, and you and those connected with you in this outrage will be severely punished."

"No one outside those who believe in Kalee will ever learn what has become of you and your companion. You have been brought here to be offered as a sacrifice at the coming annual festival in honor of Kalee. She is hungry for the blood of her victims. They are so few these days that she suffers much for the lack of nourishment. Once it was different," and the priest's eyes shone with religious enthusiasm. "Once the victims were so numerous that she could bathe in their blood, and gorge herself to repletion. Then our order was prosperous, and we had everything we wanted. But the advent of the cursed Feringhees changed all that. We are no longer powerful. We are no longer feared. The traveler on the highways and byways passes along undisturbed at all hours of the day and night. Our people have been imprisoned and executed until to-day we are but a handful, and our temples, save this

one, are in ruins or obliterated altogether. Alas, that such should be our fate! Kalee should have protected us, but she slept in fancied security while we dwindled. Doubtless she realizes her mistake too late, since she must suffer in the lack of sacrificial victims at her annual festival. We do the best we can to help her, but it is little at the best."

The priest spoke as one who thoroughly believed in what he said, and had no doubt that murder was the highest virtue under the sun.

"Why should we be offered up in sacrifice?" said Jack. "We are not of your race. We are from the West, and unbelievers in Kalee. We are not suitable victims."

"You will have to do, since we have but one other. Your blood is as red as ours, and as nourishing to Kalee. She knows you are here, and why you are here, and has made no sign that you are not acceptable to her."

"Do you expect to get a sign from a graven image? I thought you priests had more intelligence than the masses. At any rate you pride yourselves on your caste and your superior attainments."

"It is not for me to explain how we get a sign from Kalee—we get it. We are her servants and we take our orders from her. Being unbelievers, you do not understand the honor Kalee is doing you in accepting your blood. You will go straight to Nirvana and be happy for a thousand years. Then you will return once more to earth, but it will be as a Hindoo of importance. Thus you will receive your reward. Take the basket and eat. You will be well treated until you are led forth to the altar. Happy are those who are sacrificed to Kalee."

He shut the small opening and went away, leaving the two prisoners to think over what he had said.

CHAPTER XI.—The Escape.

"So we have been brought here to be murdered before an image as senseless as the material it is composed of. It is tough luck," said Sam.

"I should say so, but I'm not going to tamely submit to it. When they come for us we must put up a desperate fight."

"There are at least four of them and they will take us out singly."

"They can't take us singly as long as we are free. The moment the door is opened we'll both make a dash. They won't want to use weapons on us for fear of spoiling us for the sacrifice, which will be an advantage to us."

"I suppose the other victim the priest referred to is some poor devil of a Hindoo?"

"I guess so."

"Got any more matches?"

"Yes, I have a few left."

"Light one and let us look this cell all over. We might find a weak place that we could work upon."

"Let's eat first."

The food was divided and they got away with all of it. Bad as the prospect was before them, they were not yet so cast down that their appetite was affected. While there was life they had hope. Having finished their

eatables, they began an investigation of their cell. With the exception of the space occupied by the door it was built entirely of stone. The cells were a part of the foundation on which the temple rested. There were enough of them to fill up the space on two sides of the building. The chart of the cellar given to Jack by Dharwar did not show the cells. It was merely a parallelogram marked "front," "back," "north," "south."

Midway at the north end was a cross, indicating that here the treasure was buried. As a matter of fact, Dharwar did not know where the gold was buried. He simply put the cross at random. He figured that it would make no difference, anyway, since the boys would have no opportunity to look for it. The boys went carefully over the walls, examining the mortar and digging at it with their knives. It was crumbly stuff, and could easily be dug out as far as their knives could reach, a matter of three inches. The stones were fully a foot thick, so it was not possible for their knives to help them out of their difficulty.

On the whole, the prospect of escape was not encouraging.

"If we only had a long knife, or a piece of steel with a bevel edge, we might be able to accomplish something," said Jack. "As it is we are stumped."

"I'm afraid our name is mud," said Sam, gloomingly, leaning heavily against one of the side walls.

He felt one or more of the stones give under his weight. In some surprise he ran his hand down that part of the wall, and found that two stones had receded over an inch.

"Strike another match, Jack," he said, excitedly. "These stones here are loose."

Jack struck a match, and both looked at the wall. They could see where the stones had moved out of place. Sam placed his hand against one of them and shoved. The stone moved off and fell into the next cell. The second stone was shoved out of place the same way.

"Gee! this is fine," said Sam. "If we can get two more of them out we can crawl out of this cell."

On investigation they discovered that the two stones under the hole were also loose, and they lost no time in pushing them through. That left an opening large enough for them to crawl through in turn. How those four stones happened to be loose they had not the slightest idea. The fact was they had been in that condition for twenty years, and the priests knew nothing about it. A Hindoo prisoner had been confined in that cell for two months before the festival at which it was intended he was to be a victim came off. He had a long, thin knife concealed about his person, and with it he employed all the time when he was not sleeping in digging out the mortar around one of the blocks. Then he pushed the loosened block into the cell beyond. The second block he loosened in a quarter less time. The third about the same, and the fourth in half the time. The opening was then large enough for him to crawl through. As no one was confined in the next cell, the door stood open.

Before leaving the cellar he replaced the stones so nicely that when his escape was discovered the priests could not account for it by natural

means, and believed that, for some reason, Kalee had helped him to freedom. The boys on reaching the adjoining cell found the door wide open, and they walked out into the main cellar. On examining the outside of the door of the cell they had escaped from they found it was secured by a heavy bolt. They decided to make a tour of the cells and liberate the other unfortunate. He might be some help in their fight to escape from the building. The doors of all the cells but one on the opposite side were open, showing they were unoccupied. That one being bolted like their own, they drew the bolt and opened the door, Jack flashing a match to light up the place. A figure sprang up from a corner and faced them. By the help of the tiny flame they recognized Foxi Fum.

"Holy smoke! how came you to be here, Foxi?" asked Sam.

Foxi quickly explained all about the capture of himself and the princess, whom he said was somewhere in the upper part of the temple at that moment, as her captors were not going to resume the journey until later in the afternoon. As for himself, he was to be sacrificed to Kalee in a few days.

"My dream has come true after all," said Jack, who told Foxi what he had seen in his vision.

In a few words he explained to Foxi how he and Sam had been victimized by their guide and his companion, and the fate they were booked for.

"Now, Foxi, we have not only to get away ourselves, but we must save Koket."

The Hindoo nodded. He never could return to Allabad without the princess and hope to live.

"How many are there in the party who brought you and Koket here?"

Foxi said six.

"That makes at least ten we have got to outwit somehow," said Jack.

"Pretty big odds," said Sam.

"Over three to one. If we could lay our hands on our rifles I think there would be little question about our doing them up if we caught them off their guard."

"Well, let's look for the way out of this cellar," said Sam.

Foxi said he could show them the stairs that led up into the idol room.

"Go ahead," said Jack.

The Hindoo led them right to a flight of stone steps.

"You chaps wait below till I reconnoiter things above," said Jack.

He started up and came out in the idol room, which was tenanted only by a horrible looking gigantic image of Kalee in the center, with an altar of stone between the figure and the faded curtain which cut off the room from the rest of the temple. All the gilt gingerbread work which had originally ornamented the idol had worn off more or less, and the wood itself was seamed and cracked with age. Not a sound betrayed the presence of the priests, nor Rum Jum, his companion, and the kidnapers. Jack slipped over to a red curtain which concealed a doorway at the back of the idol, parted it a little and looked in. It was the living room of the priests. The boy could see nor hear no one, so he thrust his head between the curtain and took in all of the

room. There was a curtained doorway on either side which led into the sleeping room of the priests. Jack listened intently, but not a sound reached him. In a far corner he saw his rifle and Sam's. If he could get possession of them he felt that he and his companions would be masters of the situation. He hastily returned to the cellar where his friends were waiting for him.

"Come on," he said, "but be careful to make no noise. I have located our guns, and with them in our hands we'll have the bulge on the enemy."

They followed him upstairs and to the curtained doorway. He pushed the curtain aside and pointed at the rifles.

"Wait here, Foxi," he said. "Follow me, Sam."

They glided across the room and grabbed the guns. Cocking them, they now felt equal to facing anything. Suddenly there was a commotion at the doorway, and Foxi uttered a cry. He was in the hands of the two priests, who had caught him looking through the curtain. They were astonished to find he had escaped from his cell, and proceeded to drag him back to it without dreaming that their two Feringhee prisoners were also free and in their living room. Jack and Sam rushed to the rescue.

"Fire at the legs of the fellow on the left," said Jack, "and look out that you don't hit Foxi."

Both rifles spoke almost simultaneously, and the two priests fell writhing on the floor near the cellar stairs. The reports reverberated throughout the temple. Just as Foxi rejoined them, mighty thankful for his escape, footsteps were heard coming toward the idol room, and presently Rum Jum and Nagar appeared. They saw the boys and, flashing out long knives, rushed at them, thinking the lads could not shoot again till they had reloaded their weapons. There was no time to figure on where to hit the two rascals, for they clearly meant business. Besides, the boys felt that while those chaps were at large they would be in constant danger of their lives. They raised their rifles and fired at the treacherous guide and his comrade. Both threw up their hands and dropped dead in their tracks, each with a ball in his body.

CHAPTER XII.—\$250,000 in Gold.

Following the second reports of the rifles, there came a rush of steps down a flight of stairs.

"Here come the bunch of kidnapers," said Jack. "We had better hide, for there are six of them, according to Foxi Fum."

They glided behind the base of the idol, ready to act the moment the Hindoo supporters of the Nawab appeared. As Jack laid his hand on the base of the statue, a second door slid back and he fell backward into a dark compartment. Sam, on the spur of the moment, stepped after him and pulled Foxi Fum with him. The door glided noiselessly back and they were trapped in the base. They could hear footsteps and the sound of excited voices outside. Jack lighted a match, and the light revealed a flight of wooden steps going down and another flight going up into the idol. He started upward, followed by the others. Coming to a platform, he struck another match and saw that he was in a small room in the

body of the idol. On a framework of small beams and cross-pieces the statue had been molded out of a thick covering of stuff like papier-mache. The only thing in the compartment was a couche, and sitting on this, staring at him with frightened eyes, was Koket, the princess.

"Koket!" cried Jack.

"Sahib Jack!" she ejaculated, and with a little cry of joy she sprang toward him, threw her arms about his neck, and said: "Save me! I love you!"

The expiring match dropped from his fingers, he threw his disengaged arm around her and kissed her in the dark. With a happy little sigh she nestled in his arms. Was this more of her coquetry, or was she in earnest now? Jack did not know, nor care, as he felt her warm breath on his cheek.

"Hello, where are you, Jack?" came the voice of Sam, trying to peer into the Egyptian darkness of the compartment.

That recalled Jack to himself. Stealing another kiss from the warm lips so close to his, Jack released the girl, fumbled in his pocket for another match and struck it. The light revealed to Koket the figures of Sam and Foxi at the edge of the platform, and she felt quite safe. A ladder ran up into the idol's head.

"Run up the ladder, Sam, and see if there is an outlet," said Jack.

Sam did so, but was back in a minute with word that there was no escape in that direction.

"We will have to return to the base and go down the other stairs," said Jack. "Get a wiggle on, you chaps. Come, Koke. We'll see that you get back to your father."

"And then, Sahib Jack, I will see you no more?" she murmured.

"That depends on yourself. You know I love you and would marry you if I could get your father's permission on top of your own. I doubt if he will let me have you."

"He cannot refuse, for you wear the ring of the sacred scarab. That possesses a power greater than his. It will protect you against all danger. Had I not given it to you I would not have been abducted. But now I am with you, I fear nothing."

Jack was rather skeptical about the virtues of the sacred bug, for he judged it was simply one of the Hindoo superstitions that amounted to nothing. Sam and Foxi waited for them in the base compartment, and they continued on to the cellar together. They landed in a large room separated from the rest of the cellar by a semi-circular stone wall. It was filled with a variety of articles used in the worship of Kalee. In one corner stood a number of small boxes surrounded by brass bands. Jack and Sam paid little attention to anything except a brass lamp, which the former lighted. Their whole object was to find a door to escape by. In this they were disappointed. There was no door or any other means of exit except by way of the stairs they had come down.

"Say, Jack, look at those small clamped boxes in the corner," said Sam. "Do you think that could be the treasure we're after?"

Jack walked over and examined the top one. He saw it had been broken open, and he lifted

the cover. The lamp light flashed upon a glittering mass of old English guineas.

"Hurrah! we've struck it!" he cried, excitedly. "This is the treasure."

"Fine and dandy!" ejaculated Sam, delighted beyond measure at the discovery.

"It's going to be some job to get it to Bombay, and we have Koket on our hands to look after besides."

"What's the matter with Foxi going to the village and buying a cart?"

"That's what we'll have to do, I guess; but we can't do anything till we get rid of the six kidnapers. They are doubtless hunting for us now. I hate to have to kill any of them, but they won't leave without Koket, so we'll have to put them out of business in some way."

"Say," said Sam, struck with an idea, which seemed great to him, "those chaps have a boat. If we could capture the bunch, why, the boat would be at our service. We could load the treasure aboard of her and carry it by water down to the island palace of the Rajah. We could then send Foxi Fum on to Allabad to notify the old Tiger that his daughter was sojourning at the island with us. He might not know yet that she was abducted by the Nawab crowd. If he has learned, he's a mighty wild man by this time, and has expeditions out looking for her."

The idea of transporting the treasure as far as possible by water appealed to Jack, and he said it was just the thing.

"Then we'd better get after the six kidnapers," said Sam. "Too bad that Foxi hasn't a weapon of some kind."

"What's the matter with that iron rod yonder?" said Jack, pointing.

Sam got it and handed it to Foxi. He grinned and said it was a fine weapon.

"Better fetch that rope along," said Sam. "We'll need it."

"Take it," said Jack, starting for the stairs with Koket.

They left the lamp burning and marched up the stairs to the base of the idol. Inside of five minutes Jack located the spring, pushed it, and the door opened. Sam picked a metal cup from a shelf and put it in the opening, and that prevented the door from closing tightly. Rum Jum and Nagar lay where they had fallen with their knives beside them. Jack secured the weapons. The two priests had been carried somewhere, probably into their rooms. Keeping together, the party looked around for the kidnapers. They were seen outside in consultation. Finally they divided into two parties and went off to beat up the jungle in the direction of the village.

"Where is the boat tied, Foxi?" asked Jack. "How far from here?"

The under-steward pointed and said that it was about an eighth of a mile.

"While those fellows are away let's get busy with the treasure," said Jack.

Jack and Sam went down and carried one of the boxes, holding about \$25,000, to the foot of the stairs, where the rope was attached to it, and with Foxi Fum's aid it was hauled up. The other nine boxes were treated in the same way. Then they were hauled to the back exit and dragged into the jungle out of sight. One by one the boxes were carried 100 yards toward the

boat. Koket kept with the party all the time. The boxes were put in the cabin and Jack mounted guard with his rifle when Sam and Foxi returned for the last time to the temple to get the palanquin. It was taken apart and tied on top of the cabin. They were about to shove off into the stream when it occurred to Jack that they had no provisions, so it was decided to make another visit to the temple to forage for some. Sam and Foxi went and returned with enough fruit, rice cakes and wine to last them for a couple of days. Then they began their voyage up the river.

It took them two hours to get out of the jungle, by which time it was growing dark, and they had their supper. Jack, Sam and Foxi took turns during the night, and when the sun rose Foxi announced that they were several miles inside the Rajah's district. On the third day they reached the island, which was in charge of a caretaker and his family, for the Rajah had returned to Allabad ten days before. It was decided to land the treasure on the island and go with Koket to her father's palace. The Rajah, when his daughter failed to return on time, sent a messenger to Bombay. This messenger discovered the corpses of the bearers, and recognizing them, he returned post-haste and reported to the Rajah. Then there was something doing.

Men were sent out in different directions along the river, and they found out enough to throw suspicion on the Nawab. The Rajah was in a furious rage and was on the point of dispatching a demand to the Nawab for the return of his daughter and an apology for the outrage when Jack and his party brought the princess to the palace. The Bengal Tiger was overjoyed, and when he heard her story he grew furious again at the Nawab. Nothing was too good for Jack and Sam. They were loaded with presents and honors. When the Rajah learned that the boys had found and brought away the Nawab's treasure, he was delighted. He provided a wagon to take the boys and the treasure to Bombay.

Then it was that Jack asked the potentate for his daughter's hand. The Rajah at first demurred, but when Koket insisted, he agreed on condition that Jack remain in the country and become a believer in Brahma. The boy agreed to the first, with a reservation, but declined the latter. Finally the Rajah gave in, and some months later Jack and Koket were united with great ceremony, and a week's public festival. The \$250,000 was divided between Jack and Sam, and they went into business together in Bombay, and there they are to-day, both rich and prosperous, all of which came to them through hunting for a Hindoo treasure.

Next week's issue will contain "A CORNER IN MONEY; or, BEATING THE WALL STREET LOAN SHARKS."

"Any news, Jerry?" inquired the tramp who was lying on the grass. "Not much," said the tramp with the fragment of newspaper in his hand. "I see the Pope's taking a little rest. There's an item here about the Pope and the va— Let me see. V-a-t-i-c-a-n. Isn't that the durndest way to spell vacation ye ever saw?"

CURRENT NEWS

GETS \$100 AND A KISS

Dashing through the South Station, Boston, William J. Brothers, a taxi driver, sought out Mr. and Mrs. Henry Weston of Greenville, N. Y., recently and handed over a wallet containing \$5,000 in cash and securities worth several thousand dollars which Weston had dropped in the taxicab on his way to the station.

A gift of \$100 from Weston and an enthusiastic kiss from Mrs. Weston were his reward.

"I want to commend a mighty honest taxi driver," said Weston, who called up Police Headquarters to tell of the episode.

LONG HIKE FOR FAMILY

A trip from Adelaide, Australia, to Davenport, Ia., the large part of which journey was made mainly on foot, is the feat accomplished by Mr. and Mrs. R. C. W. Searby and family.

Arriving at Seattle by steamer more than seven months ago, they set out for Davenport with their two children and worldly goods loaded into a pack horse. A baby was born to them en route, so that the family which numbered four when they left Seattle numbered five when it reached Davenport.

The distance covered was 2,600 miles, the oldest child, a little girl, walking part of the time. Only 600 miles of the distance was covered by lifts afforded by autoists and others.

HER CAVE-MAN GHOST

Morewood, a mining hamlet near Mount Pleasant, has a "ghost" mystery that is threatening the life of Margaret Frejosky, aged eighteen, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Frejosky, and county authorities have been appealed to for aid by the girl's parents.

Nightly for almost eleven months, or ever since she rejected a suitor, Margaret has had a nocturnal visitor, who, emulating a "cave man," has struggled with her and even choked her almost into insensibility, then faded into nothingness.

Guards have been secreted in the girl's room, but have failed to see the thing. The phantom recently appeared twice, and once the fingers clutched tightly at her throat, the girl told her mother, after her frightened shrieks had aroused the household. Physicians are puzzled, for the girl is normally healthy. They agree that unless some remedy is found the girl must succumb, as her strength rapidly is being sapped.

 **BANG!** 

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so has

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(A Serial Story.)

CHAPTER XIX.—(Continued).

Then, with little twitching movements of his body, he managed to back up against the rough edge he had found. He could feel it with his fingers, and with great care managed to locate himself so that the cords which bound his wrists came against the sharp surface.

Then he brought the cord against the surface and began to move his arms up and down over it. He could only move them two or three inches, and that made the work very slow and, moreover, it was a painful task, for more than once a little deviation from the straight line caused the rough edge to scrape against his flesh, and then he had to slowly and carefully relocate the sharp edge against the cord again.

It took him fully fifteen minutes to saw through the cords that bound his wrists, but finally there was a reluctant scraping sound and they parted. With a sigh of relief the boy brought his hands to the front, and began to chafe them and his bleeding wrists to get the blood circulating freely in them once more.

When his hands began to feel natural again he squatted on the floor and tackled the bonds that united his ankles.

The cords were firmly knotted, and Harry regretted that he did not have such a thing as a pocket-knife with him, but his fingers were strong, and in a few minutes he had opened the knots sufficiently to permit him to slip the strong cords over his feet.

So far as bonds were concerned he was free.

But Bones was outside in the hallway, as he had good reason to believe, and it was probable that the man who had admitted the gang to the house was downstairs.

Tired with his exertions, Harry lay down on the floor and stretched out his arms and legs, and as he did so one of his hands touched something soft.

The boy felt it carefully, and came to the conclusion that it was the heavy cloth that had been thrown over his head. He made a careful examination of it by sense of touch, and decided that it was of heavy material and fully two yards square, something like a shawl.

He was totally without weapons, and in his position anything might be of some use, and he tried to think how he might use this.

"I might use it on Bones as they used it on me," he thought, and picked it up from the floor. "It certainly would bother a man to have that heavy thing thrown around his face and arms."

Rolling the cloth up so that he could hold it under one arm, Harry began to feel his way care-

fully around the room in order to get to the door. When he had found it he lay down flat on the floor and brought his eyes as near to the crevice under the door as possible.

He could see a very faint light outside, and came to the conclusion that there was only a small light in the hallway.

Rising to his feet, he searched with great care until he had found the handle of the door, and as noiselessly as possible he turned it. Then he drew the door towards him and it opened.

As he had thought, there was a small light burning there, and he was able to make out the floor of the baluster. Holding the heavy cloth in his two hands he stepped into the hallway.

Instantly there was a snarl, and from the far end of the hallway the boy made out the form of a bulldog rushing at him.

Then he knew that Bones was a dog.

Without another sound after that first snarl the bulldog came leaping over the boards with long, silent bounds.

For an instant Harry's heart stood still, and he could almost imagine he felt the fangs of the vicious monster tearing at him, and then he pulled himself together and acted.

He did not wait for the beast to reach him, but ran to meet him on his toes, the heavy cloth held ready for use. When within four feet of the boy the dog made an upward leap, aiming for the bulldog's favorite hold, the throat, and at that instant Harry lifted the cloth up high.

At the same moment the boy braced himself for the shock of the blow, and it was well that he did so, for Bones struck him with great force, but Harry was firmly planted on his feet and with a quick motion threw the cloth over the dog's head and around his body. Cool in the moment of peril, he clutched at the loose portion of the cloth behind the dog and gave it a twist.

Then he threw himself forward.

With all his weight he landed on the floor with the dog under him, and he continued to lie on the beast, at the same time trying to find the throat of the struggling Bones through the cloth.

He was successful in this, and got a grip on it that soon put an end to the animal's struggles. He gripped hard, and what between the clutch on his wind-pipe and the smothering effect of the heavy cloth that wrapped his head, Bones soon gave up the struggle.

Just as Bones gave up the fight, Harry heard sounds from far below, and he came to the conclusion that his fight with Bones had aroused whoever was on the lower floor, and decided that he would soon have another battle on his hands while trying to regain his freedom.

But it came into his mind that he now had another weapon of defence, and now that his eyes had become accustomed to the faint light in the hallway, he was able to pick up the loose ends of the big cloth and to tie the dog up firmly in it.

He looked over the railing and could see the form of a man coming up the lower stairway. He watched closely, expecting to see more, but none appeared, and picking up the big bundle he stepped to a position a few feet from the head of the stairs.

"Bones!"

(To be continued.)

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

TIN CAN STILL SAVES DESERT COUPLE

Henry Bode, a mining engineer, and his wife are in Tucson, Ariz., after a successful fight against the desert region that lies along the eastern shores of the Gulf of California. Their supply of water gave out in the hills, where no springs could be found, while the nearest settlement was several days' travel away.

So, seeking the shore of the gulf, they improvised a crude distilling apparatus, mainly from a five-gallon oil can and several tomato cans. Thus they obtained enough water for themselves and four burros for ten days.

Then the party sighted a small Mexican coastwise trading steamer, which was signaled by the burning of palm fronds and which sent a boat to the beach. Return to the United States was by way of the Port of Guaymas. *

HOUSE PARTY TO COST BIG RANCHER \$30,000

Tom L. Burnett, millionaire ranchman, is laying plans for the biggest outdoor celebration on his Triangle Ranch, seventeen miles north of Wichita Falls, Tex., that was ever held in the Southwest. It will be held the last week in April and will last four days. The cost of the celebration will be more than \$30,000, it is stated, and all of it will be borne by Mr. Burnett.

It will be in the nature of a house party with entertainment features for the several thousand guests. Burnett is organizing the greatest rodeo ever given in this country. He expects contestants for the different prizes from all over the West and Southwest. The whole affair will be a round-up of typical ranchmen and cowboys, with town guests as onlookers.

One of the features of the event will be a barbecue, at which a feast for several thousand people will be prepared. Cowboy and cowgirl sports of all kinds will be indulged in. Mr. Burnett is building an arena with a seating capacity of 10,000 persons for the accommodation of his guests while the sports are being given.

NEW PLANTS FROM CHINA

Several hundred small parcels containing seeds and plant cuttings from the mountains of Yunnan, southwestern China, have recently been received by the United States Department of Agriculture from Joseph F. Rock, agricultural explorer for the bureau of plant industry. In the last year Mr. Rock has explored a region whose agriculture has never been thoroughly investigated and one which promises to yield many plants of economic value to American farmers and horticulturists. Though tropical in latitude, the mountains of Yunnan rise to such heights that they present many large areas whose climatic conditions are not unlike those of the eastern and southeastern United States. Mr. Rock has collected plants above the snow line in numerous instances.

Among the most interesting things found are numerous wild relatives of such cultivated fruits

as the apple, the peach and the pear. Plant breeders in the United States are likely to find these of great value, and some of them may be suitable for use by nurserymen as stock plants on which to graft horticultural varieties of the same fruit. A large number of wild roses has also been secured, some of them promising for cultivation in North American gardens; others of value to breeders. Many species of wild chestnuts, some of which may prove of great value in this country, have been sent to Washington and are now being propagated at the various plant introduction field stations of the department.

Mr. Rock's exploration work in Yunnan will be continued through 1923, during which time he hopes to make his way down the Yangtse River to Shanghai. It is expected that much information of value to agriculture and possibly new crops of potential value will be secured during the course of the explorations, as well as many handsome ornamental plants to enrich American gardens.

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The Tale Of The Tanks

By KIT CLYDE

It was in the year 1880 that I accompanied a friend for a few days on a visit to the old town of Dover. We were on the lookout for a yacht; my traveling companion contemplating a trip to the sunny Mediterranean.

While discussing our bread and cheese in the coffee-room of a little hotel, my attention was drawn to a couple—male and female—seated at a table near us, and engaged in an animated conversation. The girl, who was seemingly about one-and-twenty years of age—was a pretty-fair-haired little creature, with a gentle, pensive cast of countenance, and was apparently listening with intense anxiety to the conversation of her male companion. On our entering the room, he glanced at us, and continued speaking to her in a subdued tone.

What particularly attracted my attention, however, was a sudden change noticeable in her appearance, the anxious, loving look with which she had hitherto regarded him altering to an expression of intense anguish and horror.

"Oh, Alfred, how terrible!" I heard the little blonde exclaim, and the tears welled up and burst forth unbidden from her large blue eyes. "Why, darling, I might never have known what had become of you! How thankful I am!"

And the little hand that reached across the table, clasping his in the outburst of her emotion, displayed a wedding ring.

"Ah," said the gentleman, with a quiet smile, "it is all well that ends well, dear," and, rising from their places, they left the room. He was a young man of middle height, with a cheery, smiling countenance, and, from the blue serge suit he wore, gave one the idea of his being connected with a seafaring life.

"A pretty little thing, that," said my friend, as he sipped his sherry.

"Yes," I replied, as I recalled the expression of horror I had seen on her countenance. "I wonder who they are, and the cause of her agitation? Her joy is unmistakable, although in tears. I infer her male companion has passed through some terrible ordeal."

A delightful drive to the quaint old town of Deal, a cigar on board a friend's cutter, the ordinary dinner at our hotel, and my companion and self took a stroll on the pier to see some friends he was expecting to arrive on the steamboat from Calais. We had not long to wait. There was the usual noise, confusion, and excitement; the same greeting among old friends. My friend and his newly-arrived acquaintances returned to The Lord Warden, leaving me to finish my cigar on the pier. I strolled homeward, and somehow those pretty blue eyes which I had seen fill with tears in the morning kept obtruding themselves on my mental vision.

My way lay past the door of the small hotel where we had lunched, and I could not resist looking in as I passed. On entering, I found some six or eight smokers of undoubted nautical proclivi-

ties, from whose long churchwardens a sufficient quantity of fumes from the fragrant weed was exhaling to render it difficult at first to distinguish objects clearly.

It was a long, low room, with its walls covered with pictures depicting ships in every form of disaster. Seated in the corner near the chimney was the very gentleman who had been in company with the blue-eyed fairy that had so unaccountably aroused my interest and haunted my reflections.

As I entered a gruff voice exclaimed: "Well, as I was saying, we lost our propeller, got into the trough of the sea, had our steering-gear carried away, and——"

"Hold hard, mate; vast-heaving. We've heard that yarn before. We all know how your fires was put out, and you was tugged into port by the Lively Polly. Now, perhaps, the gentleman in the corner, what stood the grog, wouldn't mind spinning a yarn, and letting us hear something new."

Thus called upon, the gentleman to whom I have alluded as having produced such an outburst of emotion in his blue-eyed companion, turned to his interlocutor, and replied:

"I fear I have no such tales of storm and shipwreck to narrate as would interest you veterans of the ocean; but I have only just reached home, and a somewhat strange circumstance occurred to me during the voyage which may interest you if you like to hear it."

He then told his story as follows:

I am a medical man. Six months ago I married, intending to settle down in the town of Wildering, in practice, where I had taken and furnished a small house. On my return from our wedding trip I found that my trustee had disappeared, and with him the little private means which had been left me in his care by my father. Under the circumstances, my settling down, as intended, became impossible—at any rate for a time; so I sold my belongings, placed my wife in lodgings, and accepted the appointment of surgeon to the steamship *Khedive*, carrying cargo and passengers between Trieste, London and New York. We carried with us some thirty first-class and about two hundred and sixty steerage passengers, chiefly German, Polish and Russian Jews.

Among the officers of the ship was a young fellow named Littlemore, the chief engineer, full of anecdote and information, and we soon became very good friends.

Well, we reached New York, with its magnificent harbor, and discharged our cargo. While this was being done, one of the sailors engaged in his duty lost his footing, and but for the timely aid of a rope swinging close by, would have fallen into the hold.

"That would have been an awkward fall," I remarked to Littlemore, who was standing by. "He would have gone right down to the bottom of the ship."

"Oh," replied he, "that is not the bottom! We have tanks running fore and aft the whole length of the vessel, which we fill by pumping in water wherever we are lightly laden and require more ballast to steady the ship. You must come down with me one day, and have a look at them; they are worth looking at."

Of course, I got leave of our captain to go ashore while in harbor; took a run up to Niagara and saw that wonderful specimen of Nature's handicraft; went up the Hudson River, and hurried back to rejoin my ship. When I got on board I found that we should start on the following afternoon, all the cargo nearly being on board.

The next day, about eleven in the morning, hearing my friend, Mr. Littlemore, say that water was to be pumped into the tanks at four in the afternoon, as we were very lightly laden; and seeing the round manhole leading down into them open, I thought that I would take advantage of the opportunity and examine them.

I looked down. All was dark as midnight, and having on my uniform coat, I took it off and laid it near.

I lit a candle in one of the large ship's lanterns hanging hard by, and was about to descend when I was suddenly stopped by a voice calling out:

"Halloa, mate, don't take my lantern!"

It was from the carpenter's mate, who was working close at hand. He scarcely recognized me at first without my uniform, and, after a little chat with him, I said that I was going to look at the tanks, and would bring back his lantern.

I descended by the manhole, and found myself in a place about four feet high—one long division running down the center all the length of the ship, crossed at intervals by transverse partitions, leading into one another by means of a manhole just sufficiently large to pass through, while here and there similar openings enabled one to pass from one side to the other through the central longitudinal partitions.

Here were massive, cross-beams and cross-girders, dividing this, the actual bottom of the vessel, practically into partitions some twenty-eight feet below the water-line. It was novel, and to me, as a landsman, something stupendous, this wondrous work of man's ingenuity. It interested as well as astonished me; and on I went on the port side of the ship, now stooping low to avoid the cross-girders, passing here and again through a small opening, weird shadows cast around me by the flickering light of my lamp, until I reached the fore-part of the vessel. Crossing then through an opening on my right, I retraced my way in a similar manner on the starboard side. On I went, until it appeared that I was taking a much longer time to get back than I had to come the length of the ship.

I could find no opening above me. However, there must be the opening somewhere, and of course I should find it.

But no; I became convinced I had gone round the ship twice. Becoming nervous at this idea, I stumbled, and fell, dropped my lantern, and the light went out. Pulling myself together, I began to reflect on my position. As I had kept steadily to the left, I must have missed the compartment; so I commenced working diagonally through the openings in the central partition, and came once more to the end of the ship. Working back again in a similar manner, now striking my head violently against girders above, my knees against the floor, groping my way through the manholes, I arrived at the other end of the vessel. No ray of light—no opening. Appalling, horrible as

the conviction was, the conclusion was irresistible.

The opening by which I had descended had been covered! I was hermetically sealed down, imprisoned twenty-eight feet beneath the water-level, in the tanks of the Khedive.

I tried to find my lantern, hoping to be able to make use of it to strike the cover of my prison, and I found a piece of loose iron. Hope revived! I should be able to get heard now.

At it I went—bang, bang, bang. Surely I never struck so hard before or since as in those blows for liberty and life. But useless all my efforts, vain all my cries and blows. I gave myself up as lost. I should perish slowly here of hunger and thirst, while friends were within a few feet of me.

Suddenly I fancied I heard sounds, and carefully noting the position of the hatch, I groped my way toward the center of the vessel. Here I distinctly heard voices, succeeded at intervals by a heavy fall and crash. I was near the coal bunkers, and again endeavored to make myself heard, with no better result than before. So I went back to the point of my entrance into what now seemed my living tomb, and sank exhausted below it. Then I remembered Littlemore having said they would pump water at four that afternoon. I should not starve to death, then; I should drown—drown like a rat in a hole.

It was too fearful! I began now, in my utter despair, to try and think how long I had to live. I must have been there some hours.

I reflected that as the water was pumped in, the air would become compressed, and I should become suffocated before the water got high enough. Suffocation or drowning! which was the easiest death of the two, I wondered? I felt myself losing my reason; amidst all my horror, the thought of my young, loving wife haunted me, that she should be left so ill-provided for to struggle on through the world alone. Oh, she would never even know what had become of me!—might think that I was still alive and had abandoned her! A gurgling noise, a dull thud, followed by the rush of water. They are filling the tanks! I became unconscious.

A sensation of fresh and cooling air. A sense of gentle hands about me. A returning idea of voices, existence, life, and light. I opened my eyes to find myself on the deck of the vessel, surrounded by kind and anxious faces. Saved! I had been rescued from inevitable death by an accident. One of the seamen, injuring his leg in getting in a large chest, the doctor was inquired for, and as I was known to have come on board, everybody was asking if I had been seen, as I was not in my cabin. By great good luck, the carpenter-mate heard me inquired for, and said he had not seen me since eleven in the morning, when I went down to look at the tanks.

"Then," said Littlemore, "that's where he is now, and we have just commenced pumping in."

Of course, the order was given immediately to pump out the water, the top hatch was forced off, and I was brought up in a state of insensibility. Not a minute too soon. It was four o'clock and I had been five hours in the tanks; and it was some days before I recovered from the effects of the shock.

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

NEW YORK, APRIL 13, 1923

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

GREAT HORNED OWL

About two weeks ago people of Turner, Me., were surprised to see a large bird pick up a 50-pound calf and fly over a stone wall with it. Since then the bird has been captured by Fred Sanborn. It is a horned owl more than three feet in length.

CLEVER COUNTERFEIT \$20 NOTE

The Treasury Department has issued a warning against a new counterfeit \$20 Federal Reserve note. The general appearance of the counterfeit is deceptive, the statement says.

The forgery is described as "apparently printed from retouched photomechanical plates on genuine paper probably obtained by bleaching a one-dollar bill. The face of the portrait of Cleveland is not clearly defined and does not stand out in relief from the background as in the genuine. In many places in the border designs the fine lines of the lathe work are covered by solid black ink, but apparently to inexperience of the printer or the roughness of the paper caused by the bleaching process. This counterfeit is undoubtedly the work of the same person or persons responsible for the counterfeit \$20 Federal Reserve note on the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta.

NEGRO ROBS MAIL IN VAIN

Fred Phillips, a negro who came from the South a few weeks ago, and has done little else but shiver since then, walked into the West Thirtieth street police station, New York, recently, placed two packages on the desk, and said to the lieutenant in charge:

"Boss, I done snatched these here packages from a mail wagon. I guess you better lock me up."

The lieutenant told him it was a Federal case, and put the negro in a back room while Detective William Hooks sought the Federal authorities. But they would have nothing to do with the case; they said they had only the negro's word for it that he had committed a robbery, and they were not prepared to believe him.

"But I stole the things," the negro protested. "You better send me away somewhere. You better send me to Atlanta."

The police then found the owner of the packages, which contained radio equipment, but neither would prosecute the negro, once his property had been returned. So finally the detective took Phillips to Jefferson Market Court and made a charge himself. But the magistrate promptly dismissed the case and the negro was turned out into the blizzard, as far away from the warmth of a jail as he had been before he robbed the mail wagon.

When he left, however, he promised the police he would get himself into jail by hook or crook, and told the detective that if he heard of a negro committing a particularly fiendish robbery he would be the culprit.

LAUGHS

Bacon—I understand there is a penalty for kissing in your town? Egbert—Yes, there is. "What is the penalty?" "Marriage."

Pop—Cape Cod fishermen have gone out of the whaling business, I see. Johnny—Gee, paw, I wish you wuz a Cape Cod fisherman.

Pleasant Peter — That fellow, Chumpford, thinks he's a lady-killer. Pessimistic Paul—Well, his face is enough to scare one to death.

Friend—What was the title of your poem? Poet—"Oh, Give Me Back My Dreams!" Friend—And what did the editor write to you? Poet—"Take 'em!"

Westerly—Mr. Skinner is a Maine man, isn't he? O'Brien—Well, sorr, if Oi must say it, he is that. He's the manest man Oi know, sorr.

Lady (to returned missionary)—And how was the king of the savages clothed? Missionary—H'm—principally with authority, madam, and not much of that.

He—And now, darling, when do you think we would better announce our engagement? She—Oh! There is no hurry, dear! Any time within the next twenty-four hours.

Maude—Why, Alice knew Edgar had her picture in his watch. Evelyn—But she didn't know it was only a dollar timepiece.

"This is good wine. I must take home a few bottles to my wife." "She never touches wine, as you know." "True; but it will be a little present for her, and I can keep it from going to waste."

"Who was the first man, Bobby?" she asked. "George Washington," answered the young patriot, promptly. "Why, no, Bobby. It was Adam." "Oh! well," said Bobby, who never fails to prove himself in the right; "I wasn't counting foreigners."

PLAYED 12 OPPONENTS IN CHESS TOURNAMENT

The Russian chess master, Alexis Alechine, recently gave another exhibition of his marvellous skill when he played twelve of the leading French students of the game simultaneously, standing with his back to his opponents and carrying all the moves in his head. At the end of the match, which required five hours, Alechine was apparently unfatigued, and his sole request was for a cigarette.

RADIO MAKES DEAF HEAR

Wireless telephony has achieved another wonder, making the deaf hear.

Inspired by the report that a 77-year-old man, deaf for thirty years, had listened-in successfully at a friend's home, scientists have conducted a series of experiments at Marconi House, London, England, where Harry Shwer, aged 13, deaf from birth, heard music and the human voice for the first time in his life.

The boy was taken before a loud-speaking device, over which a fox-trot was transmitted. He quickly caught the beat, and to it patted his foot rhythmically. Then a receiver was placed to his ear and he heard a voice. It was found that he could hear through one ear, but not the other. Two of his companions from a deaf institution were tested. One heard the fox-trot; the other could hear nothing.

Dr. MacLeod Yearsley, famous aural surgeon, said the fact that Shwer heard through one ear but could not hear through the other proved that he possessed some remnant of ability to catch sounds which the ordinary tuning fork experiment would never have revealed.

"The most hopeful line of discovery," said Dr. Yearsley, "is that of the possibility of re-educating the deaf to hear by means of wireless. The cases of all deaf persons, however, are individual."

Dr. Yearsley is consulting otologist to St. James's Infirmary at Balham, and formerly was senior surgeon to the Royal Ear Hospital.

NEW CRATER BLOWS OUT IN MOUNT LASSEN

A new crater has broken out on the east side of Lassen Peak, according to reports received the other day from mountain points. The volcano showed unusual activity, emitting dust and smoke, which obscured the crater from view.

Word received from Westwood, in view of Mount Lassen, says the volcano is erupting the heaviest volume of smoke and steam seen from its crater in seven years, according to observers. The mountain began to emit steam just before noon, followed by an immense outpouring of smoke, apparently just east of the place where the last previous eruption took place.

Lassen Peak, the only active volcano in the continental United States, exclusive of Alaska, is in the extreme northern part of California. The first eruption was noted May 30, 1914, when a crater 40 by 150 feet was made.

More than 100 eruptions took place in 1914 and 1915, and the volcano has belched smoke many times since. On May 21, 1915, a flood of mud from the peak wrecked houses in Hat Creek Valley, near its base. Residents were driven from their homes and many cattle killed. A report received by the Great Western Power Company, San Francisco, March 10, from Caribou, said steam began to pour from a crevice in Mount Lassen just east of its peak at approximately 11 A. M. A clear view of the peak usually can be had from the dam site.

After steam had poured from the mountain for about thirty minutes a black smoke cloud began to pour out, reaching 200 feet or more above the peak. This lasted for an hour and was followed by steam at 1:30 P. M. The steam had stopped and no further evidence of an eruption were seen.

WILD WEST REVIVED IN CHINATOWN

The sitting should have been a free and easy dance hall in the old days of the wild West instead of a squalid pool room the other afternoon in New York's Chinatown. Instead of cowboy boots, the pool players and the onlookers about the tables wore flat heel slippers and there was a slant to their eyes instead of to rakish sombreros.

Yet when a newcomer entered the pool hall at No. 17½ Doyers street the scene that followed might have come from the most lurid of wild Western movies. The arrival's gaze traveled around the dimly lighted room and stopped at a young Chinese beside one of the tables. His hand sped to a side pocket. So did the hand of the other, but too late.

Another moment and Yep Sung was on the floor with a bullet through his abdomen. A shot from his own revolver had gone wild as he fell.

A policeman, who rushed toward the sound of the shots, was not quick enough to see the crowd of frequenters scuttle away through crooked snow-filled streets and disappear into doorways and alleys.

With the wounded man the policeman found only an old Chinese, who racked the pool balls, and later swore to detectives he had not even noticed any shots. In an ash barrel in one corner the detectives found a revolver with one chamber empty, thrown there by the slayer as he fled.

Yep Sung died in the Beekman Street Hospital after making an ante-mortem statement in which, according to the police, he named a former roommate as his assailant. An alarm was sent out to arrest Chin Luck, a sailor, like Yep Sung, and also a roomer at No. 3 Pell street, where the Hip Sing Tong maintains a rooming house for its members.

The police do not believe the killing was the result of a tong feud, as both men were members of the same tong. Yep Sung, who is twenty-two, reappeared in Chinatown recently after being released from the penitentiary on Welfare Island for assault. It is believed some private quarrel before, or as the result of his trial, caused his death.

GOOD READING

AMERICAN DOLLAR HAS CHARM FOR GERMANS

American dollars hold a magic charm for Germans. An American woman who lives in Berlin was recently approached by a seven-year-old German boy, the playmate of her son, who hesitatingly asked: "Won't you please show me a real dollar?"

She handed him a dollar bill, and the boy fingered it for some time in complete silence before protesting: "But its just paper; haven't you a real one?"

The woman explained she had no silver dollar, but assured him the American paper was just as good.

The little fellow wasn't persuaded. He thanked the American woman very politely and walked away in a deep study over the intricacies of currency.

In shops foreigners are frequently asked for dollars. Shopkeepers and clerks are anxious to have at least one as a souvenir. The high rate of exchange on the dollar is almost the sole topic of conversation in mixed gatherings.

VACANCIES AT U. S. NAVAL ACADEMY

Under the existing law there are authorized 1,129 midshipmen for 1923. At this writing all but 438 of the vacancies have been filled, of which fifteen are Presidential appointments.

Of the vacancies already filled 157 are by certificates from colleges, 34 by examination and 57 by the renomination of ex-midshipment. Six hundred and fifty-eight appointees to the Academy have been authorized to report.

While there has been a steady increase in the number of midshipmen appointed from enlisted men of the navy, at no time since 1914, when this was authorized, have all the vacancies that are authorized been filled by the appointment from the enlisted force. In 1914 fifteen were allowed, but only five entered and three of them graduated. In 1915 eight entered and four graduated. In 1916 twenty-two entered the Academy and thirteen graduated.

In 1917 the allowance of enlisted men who may be appointed midshipmen was increased to a hundred. That year nineteen entered, ten of whom graduated. In 1918 fifty-one entered and twenty-eight graduated. In 1919 thirty-three entered, 1920 seventy-nine entered, in 1921 fifty-two entered and in 1922 twenty-six entered. Fifty enlisted men are now studying for the examination.

OLD BELL IRKED HIM

For more than twenty years John Quirk has sat in his single room and listened to the tiny church bell in the Holy Family Catholic Church ring for mass and peal for marriages. More than a third of a century the bell, which is scarcely more than a foot high, has done duty for the Catholics of Mitchell, S. D.

And its tone and its tune began to wear on the nerves of Quirk, a lonely bachelor. Quirk, whose home is a ramshackle structure, illy furnished

and illy kept, wears a rusty black suit, and his hair is a rusty gray. He doesn't look the part, but Quirk, it is alleged, is possessed of upward of \$100,000, and when the bell began to make him more nervous than usual there was, in his opinion, but one remedy. So Quirk bought the congregation of the Holy Family Catholic Church a new bell.

"Get the best bell you can get," was his only injunction to Father John Brady, and the new bell, bright and shiny and pitched to F sharp, weighing more than a ton and costing approximately \$1 a pound, was hoisted into place, after it had been blessed by Mgr. Weber of Salem, who was here expressly for the ceremony. Quirk paid the check of \$2,200 with a smile, and declared "that perhaps now he can rest easier and not be worried to death."

CAT RINGS DOOR BELL

A small cat belonging to Mrs. Charles Webster, life-long resident of Carmel, N. Y., is becoming the center of interest for the town. The cat—Ephraim by name—can ring Mrs. Webster's front door bell to gain admittance when he comes home late at night, is an adept at shadow boxing with his own reflection in a mirror and will eat corn off the cob and drink moderately hot coffee, according to the neighbors.

Ephraim, who is black save for a few small spots, is fond of feline society. Frequently he has returned home late from some function to find the Webster house closed, the doors locked and the other members of the family in bed. The front door bell is one of those contrivances which requires the turning of a button on the outside with one's thumb and forefinger, and the gong, which is bolted to the inside of the door, rings lustily. Ephraim has observed callers ring the bell and then enter during the last few months, and, being an unusual and gifted animal, he has profited by the knowledge thus obtained.

It was a chilly evening in January when Ephraim first tried the experiment. Balancing himself on his hind legs, and with one fore paw against the door, he managed to turn the bell button with the other. Ephraim waited for a moment or two and then rang again. This time Mrs. Webster, believing a neighbor was at the door, came and opened it and Ephraim darted past her into the warm interior. The cat was so pleased with his success that he began to repeat the performance almost nightly—his time for homecoming gradually growing later and later. At length Mrs. Webster, in order to avoid rings at the front door bell after she had retired, was forced to shut down on Ephraim's evening out.

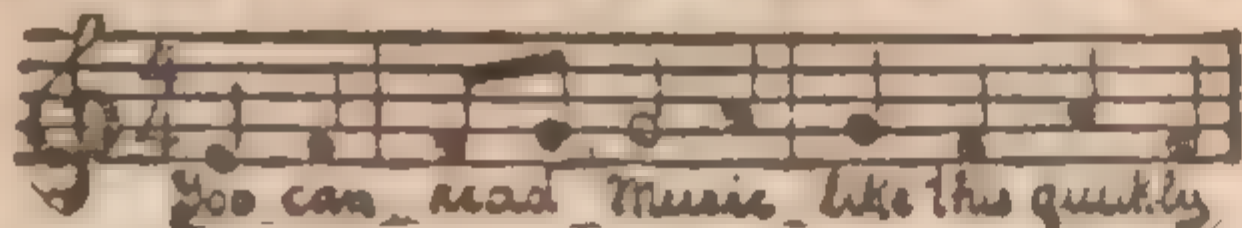
The animal's prediliction for corn on the cob was first noted last summer, but his fondness for hot coffee developed during the present winter. Mrs. Webster thinks the coffee may keep Ephraim awake and have something to do with his habit of staying out late night, so she is endeavoring to break him of both habits.

80 TO 80 MILES AN HOUR COMMON SPEED FOR BIRDS

Certain species of hawks have a speed of 200 feet a second, or about 136 miles an hour, says the Biological Survey of the United States Department of Agriculture. This might be a suitable rate for a racing airplane. The canvasback duck can fly from 130 to 160 feet per second, but its usual rate of 60 to 70 miles an hour would be pretty fast to be enjoyable in a plane making a pleasure trip.

The crow is the least rapid of a list of 22 migratory birds, flying an insignificant average of 45 feet a second, or 30 miles an hour. Of course, this speed maintained steadily in an automobile would mean a fair rate of progress, defying the speed laws in many communities. Curlews and jacksnipes can fly 55 and 65 feet a second, while quail, prairie chickens, and ruffed grouse can make 75 feet. The dove can reach a speed of 100 feet a second, or 68 miles an hour, although its usual rate is less. Red-heads, blue-winged teals, Canada geese, and different varieties of brant can fly over 100 feet per second, ranging in speed from 68 to 98 miles an hour, but usually fly at a much slower rate.

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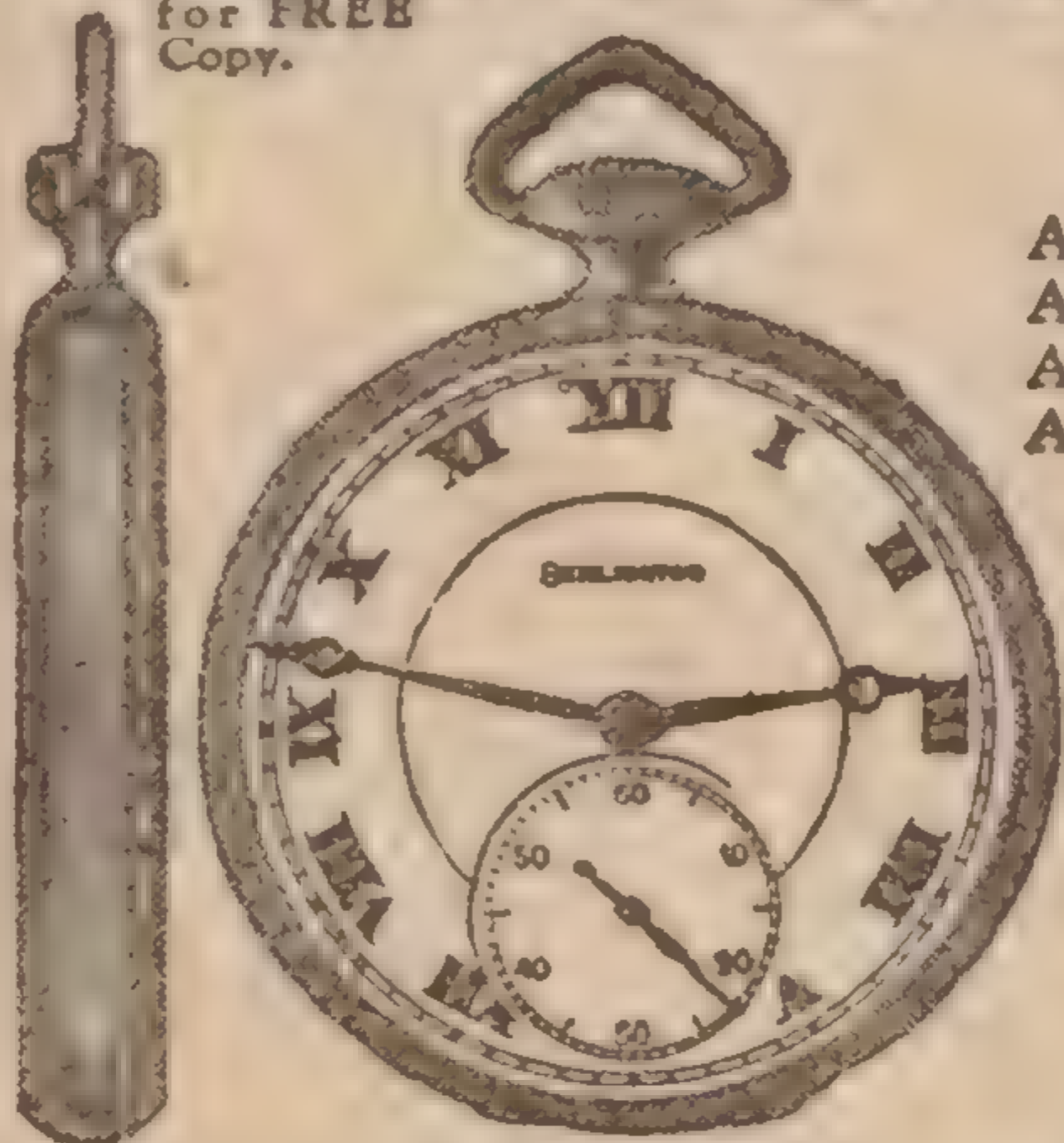
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